

A lot of my coworkers are exploring gardening for the first time. It has been fun mentoring and enthusing about certain types of plants with them. Hopefully a fair number of them will have small veggie gardens producing throughout the summer.

The silver linings of staying at home are many for me. I have all of my children, ranging from 22 to 5 under the same roof with me! I love having them all home and we all function really well together. We are loving the slower pace and more family time. Walking, biking and barely using the car except for grocery pick ups has been wonderful. Less noise of traffic, less stress of being in traffic, less pollution from traffic has been bonuses. Seeing more and more people out walking has been lovely. We live right next to a trail that is always busy but the foot traffic has increased x3 at least. Regardless of the unknown created by COVID-19, those who pass by are of good nature and exchange light conversation. Community has always been why we love Annapolis so much and our community is really being loving and united for the most part these days.

We are tackling house projects we said we would get to later. Feeling as if we are accomplishing things helps us all feel a little more in control of the chaos COVID19 has seemed to create.

Outside of not being able to gather with my friends and hug them nor travel for work as we used to, almost everything else has been a silver lining. Plus it's Spring!!!

One silver lining for me is the ability to more easily take advantage of the Strong Towns webinar events, which have been Tuesday and Thursdays from 1-2pm. They are free for now so we should all take advantage. I particularly like the Ask Me Anything events! These folks normally charge quite a bit for their time so this is a way to get some expert advice, free.

Last week was the Economics of Development 101 and today is a follow on to that presentation. Register at the Strong Towns website:

<https://www.strongtowns.org/events>

Check out the article in The Capital about how our local trails are "booming". This brings up something I have been observing since the stay at home order several weeks ago: people have discovered not only the B&A Trail but the Waterworks trail system and the Bacon Ridge trail system. As I have been out riding on the road (alone - the trails are too crowded!) I have also noticed many, many more people walking in places we NEVER see people walking. While it might seem a little like opportunism (everyone's heard the famous Rahm Emanuel quote: "You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. And what I mean by that it's an opportunity to do things that you think you could not before.") I really hope that the experience of living life at a local/human scale during the COVID-19 pandemic, sticks with people. I know once the "all clear" signal is made people will naturally get back to their autocratic, gogo lives, but hopefully this period is opening eyes and minds to how things might be if we choose to make them this way. The built environment is a result of choices we make and with an altered

perspective, we can make choices that provide a much better balance without having to spend tremendous amounts of extra money to fix a one sided system.

<https://www.capitalgazette.com/coronavirus/ac-cn-bike-trail-coronavirus-20200408-v7u5tadlj5e3xjy4wsbolbrbsq-story.html>

And my follow up comment on others comments (most are worth reading):

I thought about this more on my ride yesterday (I do my best thinking when riding alone) and anyone who knows me, knows that I am nothing if not pragmatic. I have no illusions of grandeur that Annapolis is going to turn into a bike transport mecca like places in the Netherlands (although it could be, but that's a post for a different day), but what I hope the end result of people experiencing life at a human scale by doing lots of walking and biking during the pandemic (even if just out of boredom) is that when places like Annapolis and Anne Arundel County have initiatives for better walking and biking that people won't do the typical knee jerk "that's stupid, no one needs that". I hope somewhere in people's minds they will remember how nice it was to be able to walk and bike places safely and comfortably and think wow, even if *I* won't use it, maybe it's a good idea that kids and people who don't want to or can't drive have a convenient, safe and pleasant way to get around our compact area. The resistance to any transportation initiatives that are not more auto capacity or that take away auto capacity is very strong and I hope the view of the world during this pandemic will at least let people see how one sided that is. It's not a big ask.