

Historic Frederick Maryland

For years, while on the way to hiking or cycling opportunities, I used to pass by Frederick on I-270 and Rte. 15 seeing the shopping malls, strip-malls, suburban housing and apartments. I didn't think Frederick remarkable in any way but knew that Maryland's fastest growing city in the 1990's, had beautiful countryside and mountains surrounding it. I even rode the covered bridge road bike rides by starting out off Rte. 40 inside the city limits but my opinion remained unchanged. I never saw how nice the historic downtown area was and had to be told about it by friend who happened to visit it because she was new to the area and was exploring. Subsequent visits such as on Cycle Across Maryland stops, put it on my list as a place to go to, and not just pass through. The downtown area is alive. People work and live nearby. Fabulous restaurants, ice cream and specialty stores line Market Street. You can get real milk shakes or Italian ice; vegetarian, international or American cuisine. Granite rough cut stone buildings give the place character. The city is more than just a tourist stop, functioning with classic American buildings such as city hall, a courthouse and railway stations.

Only one short route is listed here but many other places for getting outdoors are nearby. Gambrill State Park, a favorite of mountain cyclist and hikers sits on the mountain overlooking the city. The Monocacy River flows nearby attracting fishers. The old Point of Rocks train station lies to the south on the Potomac River. It's a favorite of train buff's but also a gathering place for road cyclists. Catoctin Mountain State Park lies to the north near Thurmont. Hikers at Catoctin love the autumn leaves, water fall and rock formations with mountain top views.

Getting There

From the Capital Beltway (I-495), take National Pike I-270 headed west. As you approach Frederick 31 miles from the beltway, stay to the left as I-70 splits away to the right. The highway turns north and becomes Rte. 15 after the I-70 intersection. Just ahead, take Exit 7, for Rosemont Ave. At the exit ramp light, drive straight across Rosemont Ave. This becomes West 2nd St. Park near the intersection of West 2nd and Dulaney Ave. just off Baker Park.

Area Route

Baker Park (1.9 miles, I)

For a small town, Baker Park is a big place. In it are walking and running trails, an outdoor amphitheater for concerts and plays, a fountain, a stream, a covered bridge, tennis courts, a public pool, ponds and fields. In winter, ice-skaters warm themselves in a stone building right on the water. Intermural or pick-up soccer and volleyball games are played in the fields in summer. Hood College is nearby. The towering stone armory building points the way toward Market Street. Beautiful old homes line streets around the park. The route circles the park passing these features on the paved but often narrow trails. No bicycling is allowed. The terrain is basically flat though it does rise as it parallels a stream on the out-leg of the route.

Nearby and Connecting Zones

Little Bennett Regional Park
Black Hill Regional Park, Little Seneca Lake
Black Hill Regional Park, Ten Mile Creek

What to do Afterward

Food and Drink

Rita's Italian Ices - Rita's Italian Ice - (301) 694-8834
Casa Pizza - 234 N. Market St - (301) 695-8402
Di Francesco's Restaurant - 26 N. Market St - (301) 695-5499
Orchard Restaurant - 45 N. Market St - (301) 663-4912

Entertainment and Edification

Covered Bridges - 2 remaining, the nearest is on Utica Rd. near Lewistown
Gambrill State Park - hiking
Cactoctin Mountain Park - hiking - 301 663-9388
Cunningham Falls State Park - 301 271-7574

Baker Park

Distance: 1.9 miles

Rating: I; flat paved trails; partial tree cover

1.9 Mile Route

- 0.0 from 2nd St and Dulaney Ave, take the diagonal trail from 2nd toward the amphitheater
- 0.1 pass through the fountain area after the amphitheater
- 0.15 trail bears R at creek & dam

- BR 0.25 at trail X toward the underpass
- 0.3 tunnel under College Ave begins

- BR 0.35 at trail X to go along creek
- 0.45 trail X on L to suspension bridge
- 0.6 W College
- 0.75 trail X on L toward high school; pond on R

- BL 0.75 trail X on L; R goes around pond
- 0.9 covered bridge on L

- R 1.0 Fairview Ave

- R 1.05 W 2nd St sidewalk
- 1.2 water
- 1.3 trail X on R from pond loop merges

- R 1.35 trail X on R at ice skater's stone shelter; water is just past the turn

- L 1.45 at trail X; cross W College to path along Fleming Ave
- 1.55 trail X on R between tennis and pool
- 1.75 cross College Ave following trail around tennis courts on L

- BR 1.85 W 2nd St sidewalk
- 1.9 trail X on R toward amphitheater completes loop near Dulaney Ave

