

MEMORANDUM

November 6, 2009

TO: County Council

FROM: ^{GO} Glenn Orlin, Deputy Council Staff Director

SUBJECT: **Action**—recommendations on Locally Preferred Alternative for I-270 improvements and Corridor Cities Transitway

On July 21 the Council reviewed the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) study that developed alternatives for the widening of I-270 and the construction of the Corridor Cities Transitway. The description and analysis of the alternatives, including the recommendations of the Planning Board, the County Executive, and the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment (T&E) Committee, and Council staff are included in the packet for the July 21 meeting, which Councilmembers have received again under separate cover. (We will refer to both packets for this item.)

The outcome of the meeting was the desire to prepare a series of questions to be posed to MDOT, which were transmitted on August 7 (©1-6); MDOT has provided its responses on ©7-14. Staff from the State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) will be at this worksession to summarize their responses and to take further questions. At the July 21 worksession Councilmember Berliner also requested a response to the question of whether widening I-270 to provide managed lanes would induce sprawl. The Planning Board Chair has provided his response (©15-17).

Since this summer, several jurisdictions have weighed in on this study. Below is a summary of the recommendations from government entities/elected officials:

	I-270	CCT	©
Planning Board	Alternative 7 w/HOV or HOT lanes	BRT	©A-E in July 21 packet
County Executive	Alternative 3	LRT	©F-G in July 21 packet
City of Gaithersburg	Alternative 7 w/HOT lanes	LRT	©18-19
City of Rockville	Alternative 7 w/HOV lanes	LRT	©20-21
Frederick County	Alternative 7 w/HOT lanes	BRT	©22-23
Districts 15, 17 & 39	Alternative 7 w/ETLs	LRT	©24-29
T&E Committee (2-0)*	Alternative 7 w/HOT lanes	BRT*	Page 1 in July 21 packet

*Councilmembers Floreen and Berliner noted they would reconsider their CCT recommendation if new data on ridership and user benefits became available.

On November 5 MTA posted on its website its analysis of CCT alignment alternatives serving the Crown Farm, Life Sciences Center, and Kentlands (see Executive summary on ©30-36). Its conclusion was that shifting the alignment to the Crown Farm and Life Sciences Center would dramatically improve the ridership and user benefits of both the BRT and LRT options. Although the capital cost of each option would also increase—to about \$1 billion for LRT and \$533 million for BRT—the resulting cost-effectiveness would bring LRT into the “Medium” range, and so it would make LRT eligible to compete for Federal funding, and put BRT into the “High” range, among the most competitive projects in the country. The Kentlands shift is marginally less cost-effective, not enough to change these findings (©37).

MTA cautions that these cost-effectiveness figures are not finalized. Ultimately they will be revised again based on next year’s Round 8.0 land use forecast (which will show a lower growth projection in the corridor than the current Round 7.2), an updated travel forecasting model, and capital costs stated in 2009 or 2010 dollars (in contrast with the current estimates, which are in 2007 dollars). Nevertheless, it is likely that these figures will remain in their current ranges, generally speaking.

The new analysis did not assume a station near DANAC near Diamondback and Decoverly Drives. However, MTA has stated the station can be added with a further adjustment to the alignment. This change would add about \$12 million cost, but it believes the additional 500-600 additional daily riders would improve the CCT’s cost-effectiveness (©38-39).

Council staff continues to support BRT for the CCT. Here are the reasons:

- BRT would cost half as much to build and be more than twice as cost-effective as LRT. It would also be slightly less expensive to operate (©37).
- As modeled, BRT would provide slightly more user benefits than LRT. BRT’s potential, however, is much larger: many more buses could be through-routed (circulating on local streets, then riding on the busway) than was modeled. Elimination of a transfer is a significant advantage for BRT or LRT.
- BRT can be built more incrementally as funds become available (e.g., first to Crown Farm and LSC), but LRT can be built only when there is enough funding to carry the line to Metropolitan Grove, where the maintenance yard and shop is likely to be sited.
- The LRT yard and shop must be along the line, but for BRT it could be anywhere in the corridor. Gaithersburg opposes to the police impound lot as the location for the yard and shop.
- BRT on the CCT would fit more seamlessly into a countywide BRT system.

Regarding the I-270 improvements, SHA notes that it will be studying the feasibility of adding only 2 managed lanes north of Shady Grove and “reversing” them: southbound in the morning peak, northbound in the evening peak (©14). *Council staff believes this is an option worth serious consideration.* Reversible managed lanes have proven to be the right answer in other radial corridors where there is a significant difference in directional demand. I-95 in Northern Virginia is an example. This option should also be much less costly and impactful than the full Alternative 7.

To develop its recommendations for the Locally Preferred Alternative, the Council can use the menu of options on page 2 of the July 21 packet.

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

August 7, 2009

Beverley Swaim-Staley, Acting Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Dear Ms. Swaim-Staley:

In July the Council began its evaluation of the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study, including the Corridor Cities Transitway, with the goal of recommending to you a Locally Preferred Alternative. We received excellent briefings from the staffs of the State Highway Administration and Maryland Transit Administration, as well as recommendations from our County Executive, Planning Board, and Council staff. During the course of our review we have raised the following questions for which we would ask for responses before we take up our deliberations on the LPA on September 15:

Toll Operations, Rates, Revenues, and Costs

- Would the I-270 express toll lanes be restricted and tolled all the time?
- How would they be operated at non-rush hour times: with a lower toll, or free?
- How would the two reversible lanes be managed in non-rush times?
- For each toll option, what is the anticipated range of toll rates and revenue?
- For each toll option, what is the anticipated annual maintenance and operation cost for the toll collection, including the amortization of transponders and other capital equipment?

Funding

- The Alternative Analysis/Environmental Assessment stipulates that the funding strategy for the I-270 widening would be a combination of Federal highway funds, State transportation funds, and toll revenue. What are the anticipated funding amounts from each of these revenue sources? (An estimated range for each would suffice.)
- What percentage of the total project funding is anticipated to be discretionary, versus restricted for highway use?
- Are Federal-aid highway funds fungible and/or usable for transit projects, specifically? Does this answer change if the funding is solely for a transit project that runs on a highway?

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Ms. Beverley Swaim-Staley

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- Please identify the Federal aid programs from which funding the I-270 widening is anticipated. Which of these programs currently allow funding to be "flexed" from highways to transit and which do not?
- Is MDOT currently funding any highway projects with Federal funds that are eligible to be flexed to transit, which are eligible for funding from programs that do not allow flexing? Can Federal funding be reallocated among projects so as to move flex-eligible funding to the I-270 corridor?
- The American Public Transportation Association reports that under the new transportation bill proposed in the U.S. House of Representatives, "the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) remain largely intact as states and local governments will continue to be able to flex these funds for transit projects at the local level." Does MDOT agree, or do you expect the new Federal transportation law to impose new restrictions on flexing highway funds to transit?
- Are these statements about the Transportation Trust Fund, from the MDOT web site, still true? "All funds dedicated to the Department are deposited in the Trust Fund and disbursements for all programs and projects are made from the Trust Fund. Revenues are not earmarked for specific programs..." ... "The Transportation Trust Fund permits the State tremendous flexibility to meet the needs of a diverse transportation system."
- If toll-backed bonds (i.e., GARVEE bonds) are used for this project, what is the anticipated debt service/interest obligation that the State will incur (expressed either as a range of absolute dollars or as a % of the total principal financed)? Will bond-financing for this project limit the ability of the State to bond-finance transit projects, and if not, what would be the impact on its bond-rating?

Alternatives and Impacts

- What is your initial analysis of the costs and benefits of the all-transit alternative offered by the Action Committee for Transit (attached)?
- What would be the time-delay and cost of studying this or other all-transit alternatives, in comparison to the I-270 widening options?
- What would be the time-delay and cost of studying the impact of proposed Gaithersburg West and Germantown Master Plans on I-270 congestion, travel times, and other related projections?
- Are additional lanes contemplated on I-270 south of Shady Grove?
- What is the cost of the express bus service on the managed lanes—such as express buses from Frederick to Shady Grove—and is it included in the cost of the build alternatives? How much bus service is assumed and what is its ridership? How does the ridership and cost of this express bus service compare to the ridership and cost of a direct transitway and implementing the Governor's plans for improving Brunswick Line MARC service?
- In evaluating ridership on the Corridor Cities Transitway, which I-270 alternative was assumed?

Ms. Beverley Swaim-Staley

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- SHA staff noted that the I-270 build alternatives produce less air pollution than the No Build option. Does this take into account the increase in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) generated by the build alternatives? Is increased VMT taken into account in the air pollution calculations? What is the increase in greenhouse gas emissions?
- What would be the capital cost of the two-reversible-lane scenario supported by the Planning Board?
- Examining Table III-8 of the AA/EA, the volume-to-capacity ratio on I-270 in the off-peak direction under Alternative 1 (the No Build) in Year 2030 will be no worse than 0.89 (a good Level of Service E). Therefore, an option that would have two reversible managed lanes north of Shady Grove should provide a more than adequate level of service at a much lower cost and with far fewer impacts than Alternative 7, which has four managed lanes between Shady Grove and Clarksburg. Do you concur? If not, why not?

We would appreciate receiving your answers to these questions by Friday, September 4. This will give us the sufficient time for them to be reviewed in advance our September 15 worksession.

Sincerely,



Phil Andrews, President
County Council

PA:go

cc:

Neil Pedersen, Administrator, State Highway Administration
Paul Wiedefeld, Administrator, Maryland Transit Administration
Doug Simmons, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, State Highway Administration
Russell Anderson, Study Manager, State Highway Administration
Diane Ratcliff, Planning and Programming, Maryland Transit Administration
Ernie Baisden, Planning and Programming, Maryland Transit Administration
Rick Kiegel, Study Manager, Maryland Transit Administration
Dan Hardy, Chief, Transportation Division, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Tom Autrey, Transportation Division, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Edgar Gonzalez, Deputy Director for Transportation Policy, Department of Transportation
Gary Erenrich, Department of Transportation

Action Committee for Transit

www.actfortransit.org

P.O. Box 7074, Silver Spring, MD 20907

July 30, 2009

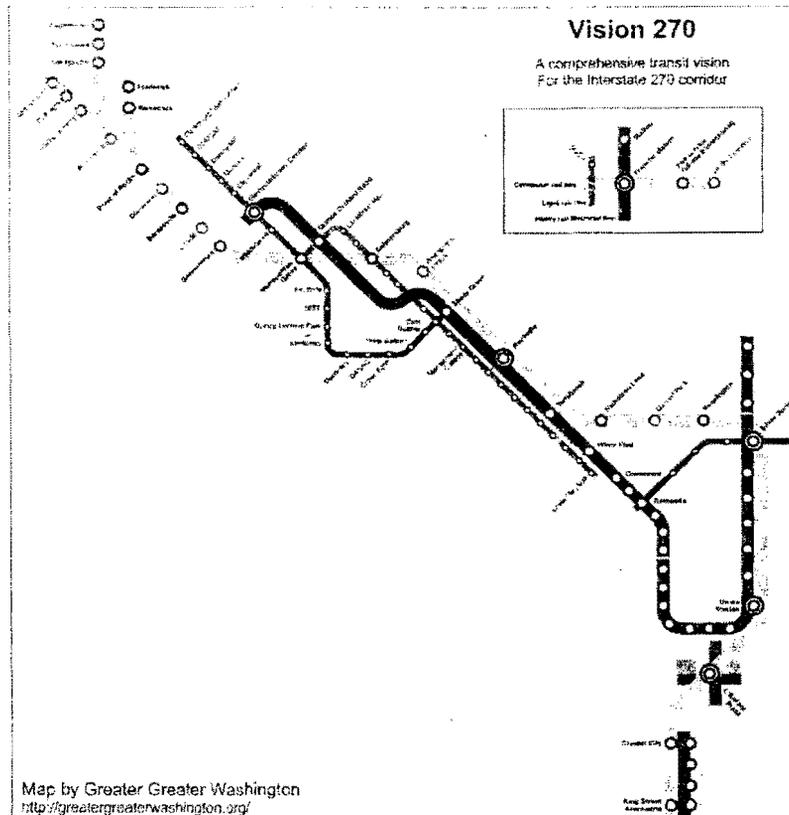
Mr. Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Ave.
Rockville, MD 20850

Subject: I-270 Corridor Study

Dear Mr. Andrews:

The Action Committee for Transit writes once again to urge the County Council to recommend that MDOT analyze our all-transit alternative for the I-270 Corridor. This alternative would provide more and better transportation, do more for economic development, and be better for the environment, compared to the \$3.8 billion highway expansion recommended by the Planning Board. Yet it would cost less money.

We have now developed a map showing our alternative in detail:



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This alternative has the following components:

- Red Line to Germantown. A Metrorail extension along the I-370 and I-270 right of way from Shady Grove to an underground station within the Germantown town center. This would be the first major expansion of the County's transit backbone, and it would be affordable based on the budget in the DEIS.
- MARC expansion. The Maryland Transit Administration developed a plan to expand MARC to an all day, both directions service several years ago, and we along with many residents and commuters are eager to see it implemented. The current MTA plan includes expanded all-day two-way service to Frederick with trains no more than 15 minutes apart in rush hour, at a cost of \$531 million. Our alternative also includes a new MARC line to Hagerstown, using the partially abandoned right of way of the Washington County Branch of the B&O Railroad.
- Route 355 as a multimodal urban boulevard from White Flint Mall to Lakeforest. Master plans from downtown Bethesda to Gaithersburg foresee Route 355 as the main axis of the County's primary urban development corridor. Light rail, where feasible on a dedicated right-of-way in the center of the roadway, is clearly needed along this axis to supplement Metro as far as Gaithersburg. The light rail would turn west, connect to the Red Line, and terminate at Metropolitan Grove where it would connect to the CCT and MARC. Our plan includes not only light rail, but also rebuilding the roadway of 355 as an attractive European-style boulevard, along the lines recommended by the White Flint Partnership, Rockville's plans for its downtown, and Gaithersburg's plan for South Frederick Avenue
- The Corridor Cities Transitway as light rail. We also include an extension to Clarksburg Town Center, fulfilling the promise of a transit-oriented town made to the residents of that community. Making the CCT part of a comprehensive plan, with connections at Germantown and Metropolitan Grove, will greatly enhance its usability and ridership, and increase the chances of winning federal funding for light rail.

A transit scenario much like this, and including the Purple Line, was tested in the Transportation Policy Report of 2001. Traffic modeling showed transit ridership was huge, with the Metro extension alone showing more ridership than the current eastern Red Line outside Silver Spring. The expanded MARC service also showed very high ridership. Transit improvements stimulate a different, more compact growth pattern than do new road lanes, even high-occupancy lanes. The TPR shows the combined benefits of balanced transit-oriented growth and a transit system tailored to serve it.

The TPR transit scenario was not adopted, although the common response was that it was very effective, but too expensive. This was before anyone imagined that widening I-270 would cost so much. Our rough estimate is that the transit scenario, including the incremental

costs of building the CCT as light rail, would cost around \$3 billion. This is less expensive than the road widening alternative recommended by the Planning Board. Further analysis in the DEIS process is needed to refine the cost estimate.

Unlike the monolithic I-270 widening, the transit system would lend itself well to phasing. Each of the components would be useful by itself. The plan could move forward in parallel with other parts of the state, such as the Baltimore Rail Plan and MARC's plans for the Penn and Camden Lines. Projects with extant plans, like MARC improvements, could be built first.

The Obama Administration is seeking to transform national transportation policy, resulting in a level playing field for transit project reviews, and substantially more money for commuter rail and transit. Studying and planning for a comprehensive transit system alternative would position Montgomery County to win funding for this expanded transit system.

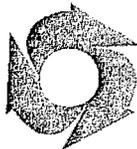
A transit system such as this would further the County Council's stated goal of promoting economic development in an environmentally sustainable manner, and it could be phased to fit with transit needs of the rest of the state. It offers advantages that none of the current DEIS alternatives provide for many crucial economic development locations, such as Germantown town center, Lakeforest, Old Town Gaithersburg, and the Rockville Pike Corridor.

We urge you to recommend that the state study this alternative as part of the current Environmental Impact Statement process. In all alternatives now under study, at least 80% of the investment goes to road-building. Including an all-transit alternative in the study is necessary to provide decision-makers with a full-range of choices.

Sincerely,



Ben Ross
President



Maryland Department of Transportation
The Secretary's Office

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Beverley K. Swaim-Staley
Secretary

Harold M. Bartlett
Deputy Secretary

October 19, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville MD 20850

Dear Council President Andrews:

Thank you for your letter regarding the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. It is my pleasure to follow up on my initial response to your questions.

The State Highway Administration (SHA), Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA), and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) are evaluating major transit and highway improvements to relieve congestion and improve safety along the I-270 and US 15 corridors. The study, jointly led by SHA and MTA, is investigating both transit and highway improvement alternatives. The transit alternative, the Corridor Cities Transitway through Gaithersburg and Germantown, would tie in with the existing Metrorail Red Line at Shady Grove. The study also seeks to determine whether a widening of I-270 and US 15 should be done and, if so, what the concept should be.

The Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) policy priority for the corridor is to provide additional multi-modal capacity that is supportive of smart growth development patterns and transit-oriented development. Although decisions will be made regarding long-term improvements for both transit and highways, given MDOT's current financial situation, it is not expected that construction for major highway improvements will take place for quite some time. However, it is important to adopt a long-term plan that will guide right-of-way preservation efforts and shorter-term, localized improvements within the corridor.

Your questions focused on several aspects of the project including toll operations, rates, revenues, costs, funding, and alternatives and impacts, including the assessment of an all-transit alternative proposed by the Action Committee for Transit. I will offer a response from a policy perspective on your toll operations and funding questions. I have asked SHA and MTA to follow up with more detail on the other specific questions you have asked. Representatives from SHA and MTA will also be present at the upcoming council session to answer any additional questions that you and the other council members may have.

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7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076

The Honorable Phil Andrews
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Central to your inquiries about tolling are many of the details that would need to be investigated further, if managed lanes were selected as a preferred alternative on the highway portion in this study. At this stage of the project, we have not determined whether managed lanes are the preferred option in the Multi-Modal Study. If a determination is made to further explore managed lanes along I-270, we will begin to address the more detailed challenges of toll operations, rates, revenues, annual maintenance, and operating costs.

Funding for these types of projects will be a challenge, as future federal allocations to the State of Maryland will be insufficient to accommodate a project of the I-270 improvements magnitude. We envision that this study will progress as several breakout projects, once we are in a position to allocate funding for future phases of the project. At that time, we will assess the appropriate sources available to fund the various types of breakout projects, including the transit portion. Our current practice is to flex Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funding for transit. The remaining categories of federal highway funding are primarily dedicated to highway safety and system preservation efforts, which remain a high priority.

Thank you again for your letter and for your interest in this very important project. Again, the additional responses to come from SHA and MTA will provide greater detail. If we may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Mr. Gregory I. Slater, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, SHA at 410-545-0412, toll-free 888-204-4825 or via email at gslater@sha.state.md.us, or Ms. Diane Ratcliff, Director of Planning, MTA at 410-767-3771, toll-free 888-218-2267 or via email at dratcliff@mtamaryland.com.

Sincerely,



Beverley K. Swaim-Staley
Secretary

cc: Mr. Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator, SHA
Ms. Diane Ratcliff, Director of Planning, MTA
Mr. Gregory I. Slater, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, SHA
Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld, Administrator, MTA

The Honorable Phil Andrews
Page Three

bcc: Ms. Felicia Alexander, Assistant Division Chief, Project Management Division, SHA
Mr. Russell Anderson, Project Manager, Project Management Division, SHA
Mr. Ernest Baisden, Program Manager, MTA
Ms. Kimberly Booker, Administrative Assistant, SHA
Mr. Dave Coyne, District Engineer, SHA
Mr. Bruce Gartner, Director, Policy and Governmental Affairs, MDOT (electronic copy)
Mr. Bruce M. Grey, Deputy Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering, SHA
Mr. Don Halligan, Director of Planning and Capital Programming, MDOT
Mr. Martin L. Harris, State Legislative Officer, MDOT (electronic copy)
Ms. Colleen Johnson, Legislative Coordinator, Office of Policy and Governmental
Affairs, MDOT (electronic copy)
Mr. Henry Kay, Deputy Administrator for Planning and Engineering, MTA
Mr. Rick Kiegel, Project Manager, MTA
Mr. Darrell Mobley, District Engineer, SHA
Ms. Caitlin Hughes Rayman, Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, MDOT
(electronic copy)
Mr. Douglas H. Simmons, Deputy Administrator/Chief Engineer for Planning,
Engineering, Real Estate and Environment, SHA
Dr. Richard Y. Woo, Ph.D., Director of Policy and Research, SHA



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

State Highway
Administration

Beverley K. Swaim-Staley, Secretary
Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator

Maryland Department of Transportation

October 19, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville MD 20850

Dear Council President Andrews:

Thank you for your letter to Transportation Secretary Beverley K. Swaim-Staley regarding the I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. The Secretary has received your letter and asked our two agencies to respond on her behalf.

The study, jointly lead by SHA and MTA, is investigating the widening of I-270 and US 15, combined with a transit alternative named the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) through Gaithersburg and Germantown in Montgomery County that would tie in with the existing Metrorail Red Line at Shady Grove. The Secretary's letter to you addressed the policy questions regarding toll operations and funding. As requested by the Secretary, we offer the attached point-by-point responses to your questions regarding tolling operations, rates, revenues and cost; funding; and alternatives and impacts.

Thank you again for your letter. The Secretary appreciates hearing from you and, on her behalf; we also thank you for your interest in this very important project. If we may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact either of us or Mr. Russell Anderson, Project Manager for SHA at 410-545-8839, toll-free 800-548-5026 or via email at randerson2@sha.state.md.us. You can also contact Mr. Rick Keigel, Project Manager for MTA at 410-767-1380, toll-free 866-743-3682 or via email rkeigel@mtamaryland.com.

Sincerely,

Mr. Gregory I. Slater
Director of Planning
and Preliminary Engineering

Ms. Diane Ratcliff
Director of Planning

cc: Mr. Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator, SHA
Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld, Administrator, MTA

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I-270 / US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Montgomery County Council Questions and Responses

FUNDING	
<p>The Alternative Analysis/Environmental Assessment stipulates that the funding strategy for the I-270 widening would be a combination of Federal highway funds, State transportation funds, and toll revenue. What are the anticipated funding amounts from each of these revenue sources? (An estimated range for each would suffice.)</p>	<p>There are insufficient future federal allocations to the State of Maryland to accommodate a project of the magnitude of the entire I-270 improvements. As the CCT is funded through the next phase and the highway portion is not, the highway portion will be slightly different and proceed at a different pace. The highway portion of this multi-modal study will progress as several breakout projects once we are in a position to look at allocating funding for future phases of the project. At that time, MDOT will assess the appropriate funding sources (Federal, State, bonds, etc.) that are available to fund the various types of breakout projects, including the transit portion</p>
<p>What percentage of the total project funding is anticipated to be discretionary, versus restricted for highway use?</p>	<p>Because of the insufficient future of funding allocations, it would be premature for MDOT to specify the percentages of the project funding that would be discretionary or restricted for highway use.</p>
<p>Are Federal-aid highway funds fungible and/or usable for transit projects, especially? Does this answer change if funding is solely for a transit project that runs on a highway?</p>	<p>Federal-aid highway funds are fungible for transit projects, depending on the source of the funds. Interstate maintenance (IM) funds, for example, could be used to construct HOV lanes along the interstate or to provide improved interstate access to park and ride or rail facilities. Other funding sources that could be flexed from highway use to transit use are described below. Transfers can also be made on the federal level, that is, from the FHWA to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), upon approval by the Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT).</p>
<p>Please identify the Federal aid programs from which funding the I-270 widening is anticipated. Which of these programs currently allow funding to be "flexed" from highways to transit and which do not?</p>	<p>The majority of federal highway funds can be flexed either between specific highway programs or from highway to transit. To provide one example, up to 50 percent of the National Highway System (NHS) funds can be transferred to the Surface Transportation Program (STP) category. Up to 100 percent can be transferred to the STP category if approved by the Secretary of USDOT to be in the public interest. NHS funds cannot be flexed directly to transit; however, any amount of STP funds can be flexed from highways to transit. Because of the insufficient future of funding allocations, it would be premature for MDOT to specify the programs from which funding for the project is anticipated.</p>
<p>Is MDOT currently funding any highway project with Federal funds that are eligible to be flexed to transit, which are eligible for funding from programs that do not allow flexing? Can Federal funding be reallocated among projects so as to move flex-eligible funding to the I-270 corridor?</p>	<p>Yes. Please see the explanation in the question above for more detail. Current MDOT practice is to flex funding only when necessary; priority is given to ensure that system preservation and safety needs are completed first.</p>
<p>The American Public Transportation Association reports that under the new transportation bill proposed in the U.S House of Representatives, "the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) remain largely intact as states and local governments will continue to be able to flex these funds for transit projects at the local level." Does MDOT agree, or do you expect the new Federal transportation law to impose new restrictions on flexing highway funds to transit?</p>	<p>At this time, it would be premature for MDOT to speculate the outcome of the new Federal Transportation Law. Once a final bill is signed MDOT will then assess the impacts to our program appropriately.</p>

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I-270 / US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Montgomery County Council Questions and Responses

<p>Are these statements about the Transportation Trust Fund, from MDOT web site, still true? "All funds dedicated to the Department are deposited in the Trust Fund and disbursements for all programs and projects are made from the Trust Fund. Revenues are not earmarked for specific programs..." "The Transportation Trust Fund permits the State tremendous flexibility to meet the needs of a diverse transportation system."</p>	<p>This comment is true for the State funds. Federal funds, however, are disbursed through the FHWA and FTA, independently. On the State level, while the flexibility is there, there is a limit to the funds available for highway and transit projects and how they will be distributed throughout the state. FHWA funds can be used for bus/HOV lanes where they are feasible, or for creating park and ride lots, or other Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) measures. FHWA funds cannot be directly used for transit-only capital improvements on new alignments; they come under the purview of the FTA, and funds would need to be shifted at the federal level.</p>
<p>If toll-backed bonds (i.e. GARVEE bonds) are used for this project, what is the anticipated debt service/interest obligation that the State will incur (expressed either as a range or absolute dollars or as a % of the total principal financed)? Will bond-financing for this project limit the ability of the State to bond-finance transit projects, and if not, what would be the impact on its bond-rating?</p>	<p>GARVEE bonds are backed by future federal-aid allocations to the State. State law currently caps the amount of GARVEE bonds that can be issued in Maryland to the \$750 million committed to the ICC project. Because of the insufficient future of funding allocations, it would be premature for MDOT to specify the financing from which funding for the project is anticipated.</p>
<p>ALTERNATIVES AND IMPACTS</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">(12)</p> <p>What is your initial analysis of the cost and benefits of the all-transit alternative offered by the Action Committee for Transit (attached)?</p>	<p>The proposal set forth by Action Committee for Transit (ACT) is of such a magnitude as to require considerable time and effort to fully analyze costs and benefits. Our initial preliminary analysis of the all-transit alternative proposed by ACT is that it would not benefit the full range of transportation-system users within the I-270 Multi-Modal Study project area, such as freight carriers and through route long distance travelers. It also appears that the Vision 270 plan has not been analyzed using a recent transportation and land use model that reflects future conditions, whereas the corridor alternatives in the I-270 study were analyzed using the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) land use and transportation models which do take into consideration future conditions.</p>
<p>What would be the time-delay and cost of studying this or other all-transit alternatives, in comparison to the I-270 widening options?</p>	<p>The study team already performed a preliminary study of an all-transit alternative, prior to the issuance of the DEIS. Based on capital costs and proposed ridership, none of the all-transit alternatives, other than the use of express bus on an improved I-270 linked with the Corridor Cities Transitway, provided user benefits that would meet both the cost effectiveness criteria established by the FTA and the purpose and need for the Multi-Modal Study. The results of the all-transit alternatives that were dropped from further study prior to the DEIS only provided a modest decrease in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) on I-270.</p> <p>Essentially, this would re-start the NEPA process for each project, including the CCT. These projects would need to go through NEPA and each be independently developed using the FTA New Starts project planning and development process in order to receive federal transit funds. The process is time consuming to complete and can require well over a decade to get a project through planning and design, construction and initiation of operation, and would cost several millions of dollars.</p>

I-270 / US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Montgomery County Council Questions and Responses

<p>What would be the time-delay and cost of studying the impact of proposed Gaithersburg West and Germantown Master Plans on I-270 congestion, travel times, and other related projections?</p>	<p>SHA's Regional and Intermodal Planning Division prepared a cursory analysis of the generated trips that would be added to I-270 and I-370 as a result of the Gaithersburg West development, which showed additional traffic on I-270 and I-370 with an internal trip-capture rate of 40 percent. The analysis of the impacts of the Gaithersburg West development on the corridor will be studied in greater detail once the MWCOG land use and transportation models are updated to reflect the new adopted land use plan. This will be done as part of the Tier 1 FEIS support, after the updated sector plans are approved and incorporated into the MWCOG model.</p>
<p>Are additional lanes contemplated on I-270 south of Shady Grove?</p>	<p>A preliminary feasibility study, known as the Westside Mobility Study, is complete for the section from Shady Grove Road to the American Legion Bridge. The study would need to undergo a full NEPA study, prior to implementation. The study would also need to be prioritized on the local level and have funding made available to become a new planning start. This study looked at both general-purpose and managed lanes.</p>
<p>What is the cost of the express bus service on the managed lanes—such as express buses from Frederick to Shady Grove—and is it included in the cost of the build alternatives? How much bus service is assumed and how much is its ridership? How does the ridership and cost of this express bus service compare to ridership and cost of a direct transitway and implementing the Governor's plans for improving Brunswick Line MARC service?</p>	<p>The CCT includes three new premium bus services, including a peak hour operating bus service that operates every 15 minutes from the City of Frederick to Shady Grove using the managed lanes on I-270. This service generates between 2,900-3,400 daily boardings. Two additional express service routes are intended to feed the CCT. In the LRT alternatives, this service begins in Frederick or Kempton and terminates at the COMSAT station, where all passengers who wish to continue transfer to the CCT.</p> <p>In the BRT alternatives, these services enter the BRT guideway at Metropolitan Grove and continue on to Shady Grove, providing a "one-seat ride" for those passengers from Frederick. They operate all day at 20- to 30-minute frequencies and generate an additional 1,800-2,800 daily boardings. The CCT transitway (the "direct transitway" we assume is being referred to in the question) generates many more thousands of daily riders at a much higher cost than the premium bus services do. The annual operating costs of the bus services range from between approximately \$6.0 million for the LRT alternatives to just under \$9.0 million for the BRT alternatives and are accounted for in the O&M costs reported for the CCT alternatives. The capital cost of the rolling stock needed to support these routes is also integrated into the total capital cost of each alternative. A total of 22 to 29 buses will be required to support these routes. However, the number of buses actually purchased to support these routes will depend on the total rolling stock requirements of the entire feeder bus network. The MARC Growth and Investment Plan includes improvements that would be implemented incrementally with a goal of increasing the capacity and quality of the service. The total costs of the improvements scheduled through 2035 to the MARC Brunswick Line would be \$531 million (in 2007 dollars), providing almost a four-fold increase in seating capacity to 26,000 seats. A preliminary estimate of 2030 ridership for the Brunswick Line that accounts for planned increases in service shows growth in total boardings along the alignment of almost 7,800 trips for a total daily ridership of just over 15,500 daily trips. In contrast, there were, on average, 7,600 daily trips on the Brunswick Line in 2007. It is important to keep in mind that the Brunswick Line serves a different market than the proposed CCT or the premium bus services from Frederick. The alignment goes as far west as Martinsburg, West Virginia.</p>

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I-270 / US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Montgomery County Council Questions and Responses

<p>In evaluating ridership on the Corridor Cities Transitway, which I-270 alternative was assumed?</p>	<p>In the recently published Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Assessment, MTA evaluated ridership for light rail and bus rapid transit for Alternatives 6 and 7.</p>
<p>SHA staff noted that the I-270 build alternatives produce less air pollution than the No-Build Option. Does this take into account the increase in vehicle miles of travel (VMT) generated by the build alternatives? Is increased VMT taken into account in the air pollution calculations? What is the increase in greenhouse gas emission?</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the build alternatives would produce varying degrees of "induced demand" on I-270, and thus varying degrees of air quality improvement or degradation over the no-build condition. A portion of the induced demand on I-270 is actually the removal of traffic on congested local streets (such as MD 355) to I-270. In 2030, for example, the No-Build corridor VMT is 40,558,000 and the VMT for Alternative 6 is 40,951,000, or an increase of 0.97%. For Alternative 7, the VMT is 41,020,000, which is an increase of 1.14%. The comparative pollutant loads between the No-Build, Alternative 6, and Alternative 7 are similar (between a 0.3% decrease or 1.1% increase, depending on pollutant measured) due to the decreased vehicle hours traveled (VHT) resulting from shortened travel times. Reference Table IV-29 in the AA/EA. While not mentioned in detail in the DEIS or AA/EA, it is also likely that, as vehicle miles-per-gallon standards increase and more people purchase hybrid and zero-emission electric-powered vehicles, it is anticipated that pollutant loads will decrease even further.</p>
<p>What would be the capital cost of the two-reversible lane scenario supported by Planning Board?</p>	<p>The reversible-lane scenario would need to be studied for feasibility, and would be initiated after the preferred alternative decision as part of the Tier 1 FEIS. The team would need to also address what would happen at the northern terminus of the reversible lanes, which would need to occur south of Monocacy National Battlefield. The capital cost of this scenario would have to be further investigated once a preferred alternative is selected.</p>
<p>Examining Table III-8 of the AA/EA, the volume-to-capacity ratio on I-270 in the off-peak direction under Alternative 1 (the no-build) in Year 2030 will be no worse than 0.89 (a good LOS E). Therefore an option that would have two reversible managed lanes north of Shady Grove should provide a more than adequate level of service at a much lower cost and with far fewer impacts than Alternative 7, which has four managed lanes between Shady Grove and Clarksburg. Do you concur? If not, why not?</p>	<p>SHA concurs that Table III-8 does show that the off-peak No-Build would only result in LOS "E" between MD 80 and MD 85, and would appear to support a reversible lane system. When the DEIS was prepared using 2025 traffic numbers, however, the same segment was LOS "E" in the AM peak direction, but in the PM peak the entire corridor from New Cut Road to MD 85 resulted in either LOS "E" or "F" conditions. The team will be using the new 2035 forecast numbers and updated land use and transportation models to determine the feasibility of a reversible system during the next stage of the study.</p>

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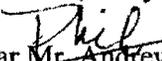


MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

September 4, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear  Mr. Andrews:

At the July 28 County Council worksession on the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the I-270/Corridor Cities Transitway project. I was asked whether the addition of highway capacity to I-270 would induce sprawl development. The question noted the context of my July 8 letter to you transmitting the Planning Board's recommendations in which I note that some Planning Board members were reluctant to endorse any expansion of I-270. I appreciate the opportunity to address both questions more fully as you prepare for the September 15 County Council worksession on this topic.

It is clear from both our past local and regional planning activities, as well as current thinking in progressive jurisdictions nationwide, that the addition of HOT lanes on I-270 is integral to supporting our master plans. Our master plans for the I-270 corridor are true to the legacy of wedges and corridors, the preservation of our agricultural reserve, and the development of transit-oriented activity centers. Some constituents may critique any development beyond Metrorail stations as an indication of sprawl, but the Planning Board and County Council have continued to find that supporting smart growth in communities such as Germantown and Gaithersburg is as important as it is in places like White Flint and Wheaton.

In developing master plans for the corridor cities we are attentive to the need to balance jobs and housing and cluster development at transit nodes. These plans increase the opportunity for residents to live and work in the same community, or to use transit for journey to work in nearby activity centers. These efforts are paying off; last year's MWCOG household survey found that residents in regional activity centers and clusters (including the I-270 corridor) generate one-third fewer VMT than those living outside those centers.

However, we recognize that our planning for local communities must be performed in a regional context. The Germantown plan about to be adopted by the County Council envisions a stronger employment center focused on Corridor Cities Transitway stations. By 2030, we expect that about one in every ten employees in Germantown will live in Frederick County, a

(15)

fairly low percentage, but one that will nevertheless result in some 7,000 commuters living in Frederick County but contributing to the County's economic growth as part of the Germantown plan area workforce.

The provision of limited, and managed, high-occupancy vehicle and transit capacity on I-270 is part of the solution needed to make the Germantown Plan work, and, in fact, is incorporated in the Germantown plan recommendations. We believe we have made notable contributions to maximizing the efficiency with which the I-270 solution can be achieved by recommending reversible lanes and a HOT lane priority system; these adjustments will maximize efficiency for transit vehicles and carpoolers traveling in the peak direction.

The need to accommodate increased travel by both autos and transit by widening I-270 is not new. If capacity is not provided on I-270, traffic will increasingly divert to local roadways; a dispersion that is practical and efficient only up to a certain point. As we developed the Damascus Plan in 1996, many constituents argued that additional roadway capacity along Ridge Road was needed. The planned widening of I-270 was a key element supporting the Council's ultimate affirmation of our commitment to the two-lane roadway policy in the Agricultural Reserve and the rejection of a Damascus Bypass. As we worked on the Road Code in 2007, the recognition that high-speed travel should be accommodated on I-270 was an important factor in our recommending Clarksburg be designated as an urban area where slower, more pedestrian-friendly, travel speeds should be pursued.

We believe the provision of planned capacity on I-270 is part of implementing already master-planned growth, not introducing sprawl. During the preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2002, the state convened an expert land use panel to examine the degree to which the different build alternative might be expected to change development on the ground by 2025 in the corridor. The finding was that total population and employment might increase by 3% to 4% depending upon the transportation alternative selected, a fairly small change relative to the 45% to 50% growth expected by 2025 in any event. In summary, the transportation system in this corridor is not expected to substantially change the pace of land development.

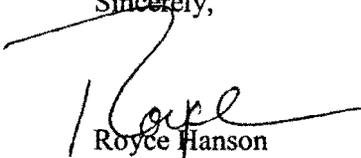
The strategic application of managed lanes is widely recognized as the new state-of-the-practice in mobility management. The 2007 report "Managing Urban Traffic Congestion" by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport notes that while many cities view roadway expansion as a last resort, it can still be an effective solution when managed as with toll or HOT lanes. Smoother traffic flow improves safety (which in turn reduces non-recurrent congestion due to incidents) and air quality in addition to system reliability for all users. The Moving Cooler report published by the Urban Land Institute in July includes highway capacity expansion and congestion pricing as part of the toolbox of strategies than, when appropriately bundled with land use, transit, and operational improvements, can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Even in Portland, Oregon, the value of carefully managed highway expansion is being recognized. In July 2008, the local agencies in the Portland metropolitan area, including the government and Tri-Met public transit agency, reached consensus on a Locally Preferred Alternative for the Columbia River Crossing project that would replace the I-5 bridges over the Columbia River, located approximately five miles north of downtown Portland. Nominally, the seven-mile long, \$3 billion project replaces a six-lane bridge with a twelve-lane bridge. However, the project also extends a light-rail transit line and manages access to the expanded lanes through a series of interchange improvements.

I mentioned that the Planning Board supported Alternative 7B modified with some reluctance because we do believe we must continue to focus first upon our demand management strategies and highway widening should be the last tool in the toolbox. The County's parking supply and bus rapid transit studies are important steps forward in this regard. Our Growth Policy and CR zone recommendations support demand reduction through increased housing opportunities near jobs and transit. An expeditious and affirmative recommendation from Montgomery County on both the highway and transit elements of this multimodal project is the best way to keep the Corridor Cities Transitway moving forward.

In summary, it would be nice to be able to find that demand management and transit solutions alone could solve all our mobility needs. However, I recognize the need to support our smart growth plans in the corridor, preserve a human scale in communities such as Clarksburg and Damascus, and prioritize transit and carpool services in the corridor. I appreciate the opportunity reiterate the Board's position that, given these objectives, the strategic application of reversible HOT lanes for I-270 is a pragmatic solution that deserves the Council's support. I look forward to discussing this with you further on September 15.

Sincerely,



Royce Hanson
Chairman



September 16, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Council President Andrews: *Phil*

The Mayor and City Council of Gaithersburg have finalized the City's position on the transit and highway components of the I270/US15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study, and would request that the County Council carefully consider our views when it develops its formal position.

The City has strongly advocated for light rail as the preferred mode for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) for many years but we understand that based on the current Cost Effective Ratio of the project, light rail would not qualify for federal transit funding. Therefore, given that costs associated with light rail inhibit the competitiveness of the project for Federal funding, the City is supportive of a bus rapid transit (BRT) mode. Should there be a change in the applicable formulas, available federal resources, or data relied upon (such as ridership, planned densities, etc.), the City would support light rail as the most desirable and efficient mode for the CCT.

The City is very supportive of the alternative alignments that would serve both the Crown Farm and Kentlands. If the CCT mode is BRT, the City strongly opposes locating the operations and maintenance facility at Site 6 on Metropolitan Grove Road.

With respect to highway improvements, the City supports Alternative 7 with two restricted lanes in each direction between Sam Eig Highway and MD-85; however, the City would strongly prefer High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes rather than Express Toll Lanes (ETL). We firmly believe that this alternative would provide significant congestion relief by retaining incentives to carpool while still providing a funding source to support construction. However, because the Alternative 7 restricted lanes would be barrier-separated, we urge you to support designs that do not isolate the City but rather establish sufficient connectivity between the restricted lanes and entrance/exit points within the City.

Recognizing that Alternative 7 will cause some displacement, the City requests that the State Highway Administration work closely with affected homeowners, communities, and businesses to minimize impacts and ensure that the remaining communities are sustainable. Additionally, the State should offer to purchase impacted properties as soon as possible rather than waiting for actual construction.

City of Gaithersburg • 31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-2098
301-258-6300 • FAX 301-948-6149 • TTY 301-258-6430 • cityhall@gaitthersburgmd.gov • www.gaitthersburgmd.gov

MAYOR
Sidney A. Katz

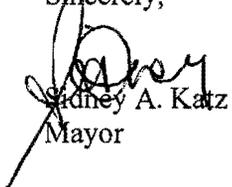
COUNCIL MEMBERS
Iud Ashman
Cathy C. Drzyzgula
Henry F. Marraffa, Jr.
Michael A. Sesma
Ry...egel

CITY MANAGER
Angel L. Jones

The Honorable Phil Andrews
September 16, 2009
Page 2

Your consideration of the City's views would be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me or Assistant City Manager Fred Felton at 301-258-6310 if you or your staff should have any questions.

Sincerely,



Sidney A. Katz
Mayor

SAK/ms
Enclosure

cc: County Council
City Council
Angel L. Jones, City Manager
Frederick J. Felton, Assistant City Manager

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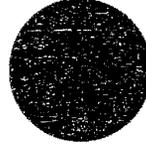
City of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364
www.rockvillemd.gov

Mayor & Council
240-314-8280
TTY 240-314-8137
FAX 240-314-8289

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October 28, 2009

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850



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MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COUNCIL

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Re: I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study

Dear Mr. Andrews:

This letter provides the Mayor and Council of Rockville's position regarding the highway and transit improvements of the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. The City supports Alternative 7A with High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes for the I-270/US 15 improvements and the Light Rail Transit option for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT).

The Mayor and Council believe Alternative 7 with HOV lanes would provide more road capacity than Alternative 6 and significant congestion relief while providing incentives to carpool. In regards to the CCT, the Mayor and Council view the light rail transit as the more favorable option for potential riders.

Montgomery County's 2008 joint priority letter lists the CCT as a project of regional significance that should be funded. This project has become even more significant as Montgomery County considers the Gaithersburg West Master Plan. The CCT will help relieve congestion generated by thousands of new jobs and housing units planned in the area, which will lower pressure on Rockville intersections near or adjacent to the Gaithersburg West Master Planning area.

The Mayor and Council are concerned that the highway improvements are tied to the CCT. These highway improvements account for 83 to 90 percent of the total cost of the entire project. Therefore, the Mayor and Council feel that the CCT portion should be constructed prior to road improvements to encourage mass transit use before more road capacity opens. If highway

MAYOR
Susan R. Hoffmann

COUNCIL
John B. Britton
Piotr Gajewski
Phyllis Marcuccio
Anne M. Robbins

CITY MANAGER
Scott Ullery

CITY CLERK
Claire F. Funkhouser

CITY ATTORNEY
Debra Yerg Daniel

20

The Honorable Phil Andrews
President, Montgomery County Council
10/28/09
Page 2

Re: I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study

improvements could not be built, the Mayor and Council would recommend that the CCT be constructed to help reduce traffic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan R. Hoffman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Susan R. Hoffman
Mayor

Cc: John Britton, Councilmember
Piotr Gajewski, Councilmember
Phyllis Marcuccio, Councilmember
Anne M. Robbins, Councilmember
Scott Ullery, City Manager
Craig Simoneau, Director of Public Works
Emad Elshafei, Chief, Traffic and Transportation Division
Rebecca Torma, Transportation Planner II



COMMISSIONERS FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

Winchester Hall • 12 East Church Street • Frederick, Maryland 21701
301-600-1100 • FAX: 301-600-1849 • TTY: Use Maryland Relay
www.co.frederick.md.us

September 3, 2009

Beverley K. Swaim-Staley
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

COMMISSIONERS

Jan H. Gardner
President

David P. Gray
Vice President

Kai J. Hagen

Charles A. Jenkins

John L. Thompson, Jr.

COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

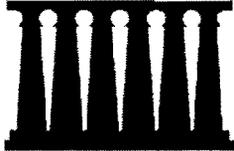
Ronald A. Hart
County Manager

Barry L. Stanton
Assistant County Manager

Joyce M. Grossnickle
Administrative Officer

Robin K. Santangelo
Public Information Officer

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Re: I-270/US 15 Multimodal Study Preferred Alternative

Dear Secretary Swaim-Staley:

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners of Frederick County (BOCC), I am writing to share Frederick County's Preferred Alternative for the I-270 / US 15 Multimodal Study. At our August 20, 2009 public meeting, the BOCC voted unanimously to support Alternative 7B, which would provide two additional managed express toll lanes in each direction and Bus Rapid Transit as the preferred transit mode on the Corridor Cities Transitway. The County Commissioners greatly desire a transit alternative for Frederick County commuters. This option accommodates Bus Rapid Transit, which is the only transit opportunity presented within Frederick County. Many of our residents would prefer the extension of rail into Frederick County.

The County Commissioners also support the following:

- Further study of High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes within the context of any future managed toll lane scenario;
- Maximum mitigation through minimization of all associated build alternative impacts;
- Further study of direct access from the managed lanes to park & rides, specifically to the MD 80 / Urbana Park & Ride;
- Inclusion of additional premium bus service in the corridor including the provision of express service originating in Frederick County directly to Shady Grove Metro and consideration for routing additional Frederick County originating routes to provide local bus service along the Corridor Cities Transitway;
- Inclusion of a shared use path parallel to any transitway alternative;
- Consideration of extending future rail north into Frederick County;
- In addition, we do not support the consideration of using reversible lanes in Frederick County.

We believe these recommendations best support the existing need for and management of long-term travel movement in the corridor. Frederick County has contributed local funding to advance numerous projects in the corridor and will continue to partner on important projects in the future.

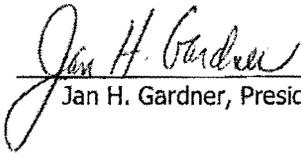
The Frederick County Commissioners understand that transit and highway surface funding is derived from separate sources. Since Bus Rapid Transit depends on surface projects, we are concerned that the prioritization of transit over surface projects will delay or defer Bus Rapid Transit for Frederick County. Our only transit option depends upon surface funding.

Beverley K. Swaim-Staley
September 3, 2009
Page 2

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on enhancing the transportation network in Maryland. We look forward to continuing a productive partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation and to actively participate in the development of projects in the I-270/US 15 corridor. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact John Thomas, Principal Planner in the Division of Planning at 301-600-6768, or me at 301-600-3190.

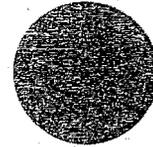
Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: 
Jan H. Gardner, President

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Frederick County Delegation Members
The Honorable William J. Holtzinger, Mayor, City of Frederick
Ron Hart, County Manager
Eric Soter, Director, Division of Planning
Al Hudak, P.E., Director, Division of Public Works
Joyce Grossnickle, Administrative Officer, Office of the County Manager
Neil Pedersen, Administrator, State Highway Administration
Paul Wiedefeld, Administrator, Maryland Transit Administration
Dave Coyne, District Engineer, State Highway Administration
Rich Hall, Maryland Department of Planning
Glenn Orlin, Montgomery County Council
Dan Hardy, Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission
Gary Erenreich, Montgomery County Division of Public Works
Reading File

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THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

July 30, 2009

Mr. Russell Anderson, Project Manager
Maryland State Highway Administration
Project Management Division
707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop C-301
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. Anderson:

We are writing to express our fervent support for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), which is our number one transportation priority, to stay on track for construction in 2012.

This project is shovel-ready with the right-of-way largely set aside. There is little or no opposition in the community with strong local business and government support. Compared to other mass transit projects, the overall costs are very modest. We urge creativity in financing, including a public/private partnership and a combination of federal, state, and local aid.

By providing a link between many communities – Clarksburg, Germantown, Gaithersburg, and Rockville – to the Shady Grove Metro Station, this project will benefit commuters in some of the fastest growing communities in both Montgomery and Frederick Counties and alleviate traffic congestion in the I-270 corridor. In addition, the CCT will play a vital role in the continued economic development of Montgomery and Frederick Counties and the state.

We believe that light rail should be the mode choice for the portion of the route from Shady Grove to Clarksburg. Economic development is more likely near light rail transit, and light rail promotes a more high quality transit-oriented development in burgeoning town centers. Studies have shown that more people choose to get out of their cars for light rail, as opposed to bus-rapid-transit (BRT). Light rail would have lower operational costs than BRT because, as demand increases, more rail cars can be added at no additional personnel cost. However, if BRT is the necessary choice due to Federal Transit Administration cost effectiveness requirements, then we urge that such BRT truly be a “rail on wheels” system, without compromising the advertised service level, speed, and quality.

Additionally, we support two Express Toll Lanes (ETLs), as a component of this project, to help reduce congestion on I-270. We also think that the Montgomery County Planning Board's recommendation of reversible lanes is worth further exploration, as it could alleviate traffic congestion while mitigating negative environmental impacts. These ETLs should be combined with general-purpose lanes without tolls, so that these new transportation facilities will be financed in large part by private investments.

We thank you in advance for your attention to these important matters.

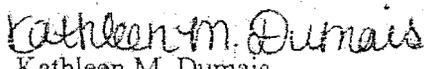
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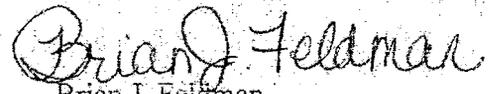

Rob Caragiola
State Senator - District 15

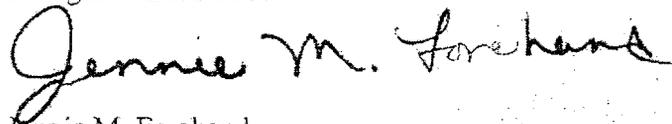

Saqib Ali
Delegate - District 39


Charles E. Barkley
Delegate - District 39

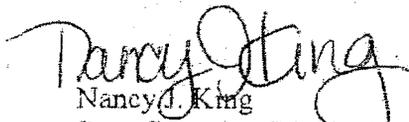

Kumar P. Barve
Delegate - District 17

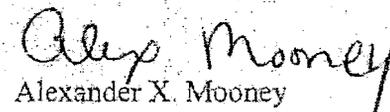

Kathleen M. Dumais
Delegate - District 15


Brian J. Feldman
Delegate - District 15

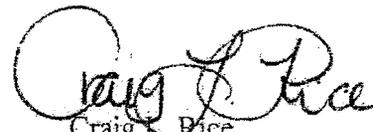

Jennie M. Forehand
State Senator - District 17


James W. Gilchrist
Delegate - District 17


Nancy J. King
State Senator - District 39


Alexander X. Mooney
State Senator - District 3


Kirill Reznik
Delegate - District 39


Craig L. Rice
Delegate - District 15


Richard B. Weldon, Jr.
Delegate - District 3B

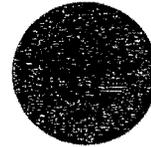
Cc: The Honorable Martin J. O'Malley, Governor
The Honorable Beverley Swaim-Staley, Maryland Department of Transportation,
Acting Secretary



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

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October 30, 2009



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RECEIVED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COUNCIL

Dear County Councilmembers:

Now is a very important time for the long-awaited Corridor Cities Transitway. We understand that the County Council will be determining the County's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. Your decision will bring the CCT one step closer to being funded and built.

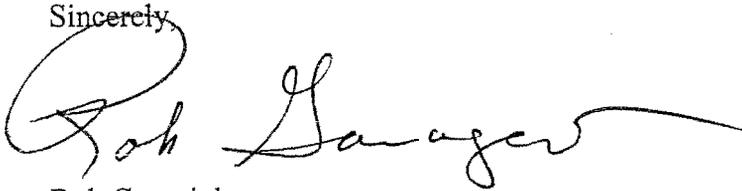
In your preliminary discussions on the LPA for the project, the Council had some questions about the impact of studying alternative transit options. We now know from State Highway Administration (SHA) that it would be extremely detrimental to the CCT to make significant changes to the study at this juncture. The response from the SHA states that further studying the all-transit alternative offered by the Action Committee for Transit (ACT), would put the project on hold for "well over a decade" and "cost several millions of dollars." We are sure you agree that this is untenable. While some aspects of the ACT's concept plan are attractive (e.g. Metro to Germantown), the proposal is a significant departure that would derail years of progress towards getting the CCT funded and built.

We have also received information from Maryland Department of Transportation with the long awaited analysis of the impact of proposed master plan and re-alignment changes to the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT). Their analysis found that both the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and Crown Farm re-alignments "have a strongly positive impact on the CCT's ridership and cost effectiveness," which they concluded would result in a net increase of 15% to 40% in daily boardings and would also "result in a strongly positive impact on the project's cost effectiveness."

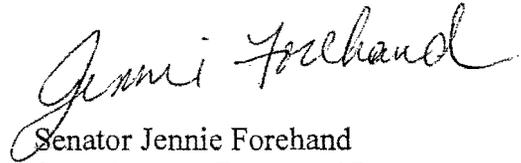
The new numbers show a dramatic increase in ridership from these alignment changes, which could make the Corridor Cities Transitway qualify for funding as light-rail. As you know, cost effectiveness criteria are critical for any new transit system to move forward under the highly competitive Federal Transit Administration New Starts funding process.

We urge you to move forward on your determination of the Council's Locally Preferred Alternative for the I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. Given the new information on cost-effectiveness, we hope you will join us in supporting Light-Rail for the Corridor Cities Transitway. With your help, the CCT is "Good to Go."

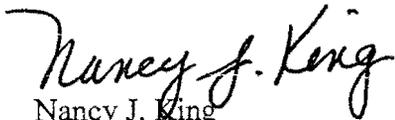
Sincerely,



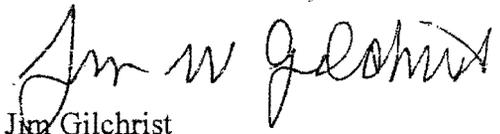
Rob Garagiola
State Senator - District 15



Senator Jennie Forehand
State Senator-Districts 17



Nancy J. King
State Senator - District 39



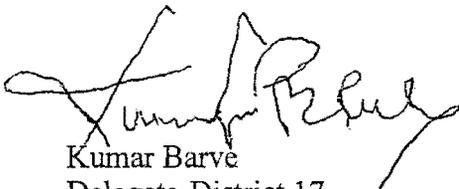
Jim Gilchrist
Delegate-District 17



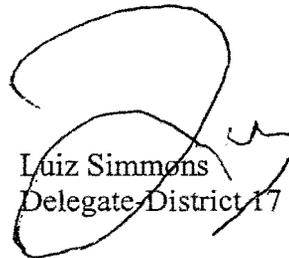
Kathleen M. Dumais
Delegate - District 15



Brian J. Feldman
Delegate - District 15



Kumar Barve
Delegate-District 17



Luiz Simmons
Delegate-District 17

TRAN

KIRILL REZNIK
39th Legislative District
Montgomery County

Health and Government
Operations Committee

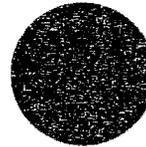


Annapolis Office
The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 225
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3039 · 410-841-3039
800-492-7122 Ext. 3039
Fax 301-858-3003 · 410-841-3003
Kirill.Reznik@house.state.md.us

District Office
301-540-0054 · Fax 301-540-0911

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

052314



October 30, 2009

2009 NOV -4 AM 11:33

RECEIVED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COUNCIL

Dear County Councilmembers:

In light of other correspondence from members of the Montgomery County General Assembly Delegation, we felt the need to write this letter to state our position on the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) and the I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study.

First, let us explicitly state that we are in complete agreement with our colleagues that the CCT is a top priority for our region. It must move forward, and, as such, the I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study should not be hindered or delayed in anyway. We are heartened by the new numbers that show a dramatic increase in ridership from these alignment changes, which could qualify the CCT for Federal Transit Administration New Starts funding as light-rail.

The alternative study proposed by the Action Committee for Transit which takes into consideration an all-transit alternative has many aspects that are currently unfeasible, would delay the CCT for over a decade and would cost millions of dollars that could and should be used towards implementing the construction of the CCT.

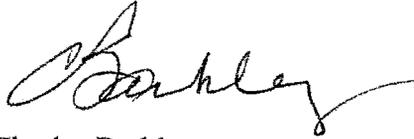
We must also state that construction of the CCT, as imminently necessary as it is, should not be the only solution to transit in the Upcounty. With an ever growing population and increasing transportation needs, we will require constant vigilance and continued efforts to make sure that those needs are met. Therefore, as we move forward with the CCT, we must also continue to study reasonable transportation alternatives including mass transit, road design, and benefits to employers to locate in the Upcounty and/or provide incentives for commuter alternatives.

Only by taking an approach that moves the CCT forward while continuing to explore these additional alternatives will we be able to stay ahead of the transportation needs of Upcounty residents and maintain the quality of life we have come to enjoy in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,



Kirill Reznik
State Delegate – District 39



Charles Barkley
State Delegate – District 39

cc: County Executive Ike Leggett

I. Executive Summary

Project Background

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) have been working cooperatively to assess a series of multimodal improvements in Montgomery and Frederick Counties as part of *I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study*. This process has included the development of documents required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 including the *I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f)* (DEIS), completed in 2002, and the *I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Assessment* (AA/EA), completed in May 2009

Together, the DEIS and AA/EA analyze the environmental and transportation benefits and costs of a comprehensive array of highway and transit alternatives. These include a No-Build alternative; a Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative; highway capacity improvements including general purpose lanes, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, and Express Toll Lanes (ETLs); and transit capacity improvements ranging from premium buses operating on managed lanes to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Light Rail Transit (LRT) on the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT). Transit alternatives analysis in the AA/EA includes examination of the transportation benefits of a No-Build alternative and TSM alternative against the CCT alternatives. Public hearings have been held on both the DEIS and the AA/EA. MTA and SHA are coordinating with local governments and the public towards the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to advance the project into the next phases of project development.

The CCT is a 14-mile transitway between the Shady Grove Metrorail station in Rockville and the towns of Gaithersburg, Germantown and Clarksburg (see Figure 1). This transit link has been envisioned by project stakeholders to be a high-capacity transit system on a dedicated transitway, either as a BRT or LRT system. The alignment for this transit system has been identified as part of Montgomery County's planning goals since the 1980's.

The Montgomery County Planning Board and Council are currently engaged in an ongoing process to update one of the County's master plans as provided in the Planning Board draft of the *Gaithersburg West Master Plan*. These activities have spurred interest in assessing whether the CCT Master Plan alignment could be modified to provide more direct access to areas identified for development. The specific areas of interest are the Crown Farm property along Fields Road, the Life Sciences Center (LSC) area on properties located along both sides of Key West Avenue, and the Kentlands commercial redevelopment site along Great Seneca Highway.

MTA agreed to conduct a study to determine the viability of these alignment alternatives to support decision making on approval of the Gaithersburg West Master Plan and a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the CCT. Several alignment alternatives have been identified to serve the areas of interest. This document presents the results of this study, which includes analysis conducted regarding engineering feasibility, potential impacts to environmental and community resources, cost and ridership implications, and the competitive benefits when analyzed using FTA New Starts funding program guidance of the proposed modified alignments. Planning is an evolving process and key project information is continuously updated as methods and data are refined. To facilitate an accurate assessment of these alternatives against the alternatives that use the original Master Plan alignment, reported in the AA/EA and DEIS, this report also updates some information previously presented on these alternatives. This include capital costs, Operating and Maintenance Costs, user benefits (a measure of travel time savings to transit system users),

and cost-effectiveness. These updates are provided as a means of ensuring an “apples-to-apples” comparison of all alternatives against one another as well as ensuring the use of the most accurate information available to date. As planning of the project continues on the selected locally preferred alternative, estimates of these and other factors will continue to evolve in response to more refined engineering and analysis.

Description of Alternatives

The MTA developed a range of alternatives to provide information to decision-makers on the relative merits of different modes, alignments and investment levels for providing access to the three specific areas targeted for large-scale transit-oriented development in the corridor.

Table S-1 describes the alternatives as they relate to these three destinations and to the Master Plan. Figure S-1 shows the full array of alternative alignments with respect to the Master Plan alignment.

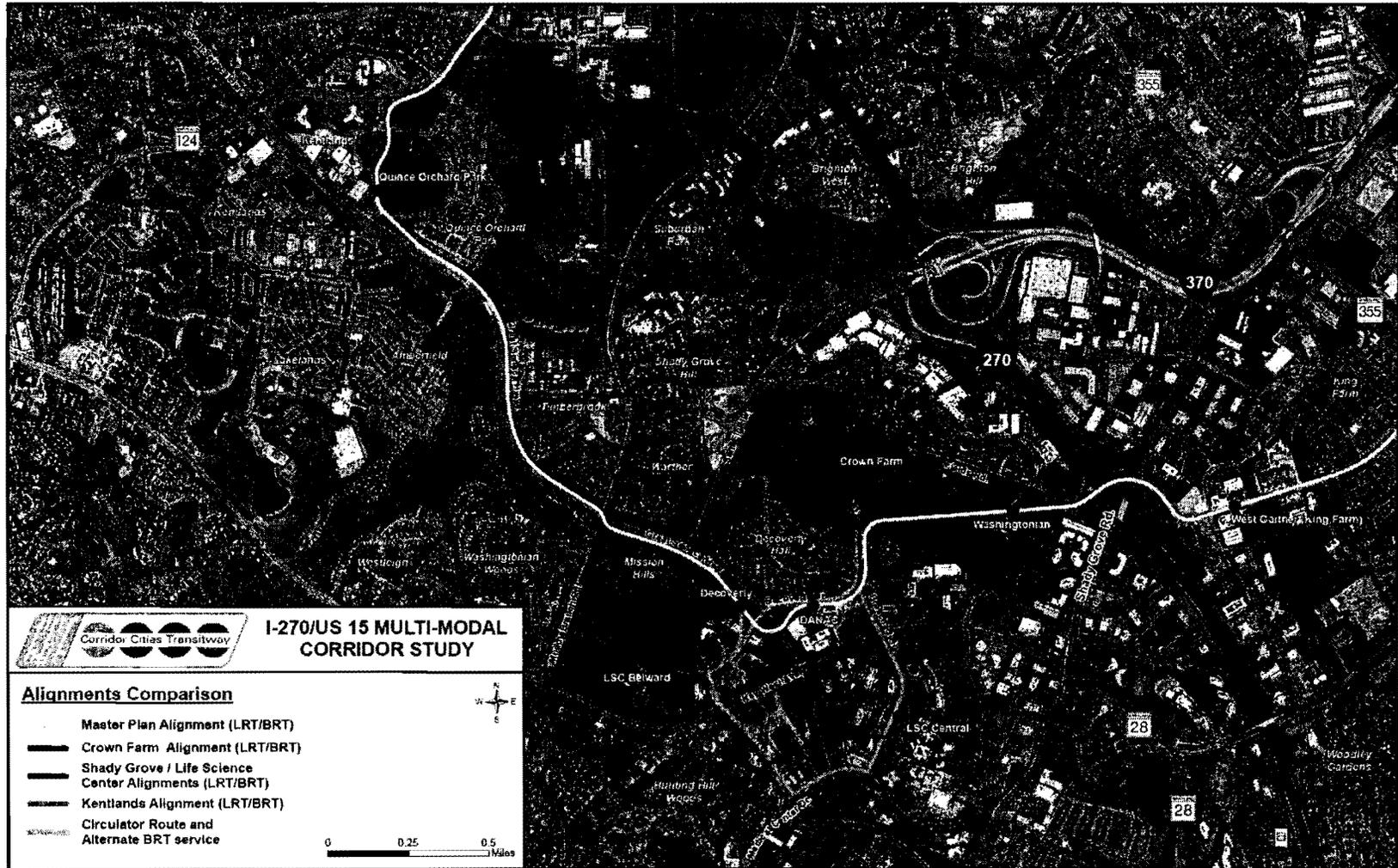
Table S-1: Alignment Alternatives

Modeled Alternative	Alternative Description
6A	Light rail transit using original Master Plan alignment, as studied and presented in the AA/EA document
6B	Bus rapid transit using original Master Plan alignment, as studied and presented in the AA/EA document
AA1	Transit TSM (bus using local roads) to Crown Farm and LSC
AA2	LRT to Crown Farm and LSC
AA3	BRT to Crown Farm and LSC
AA4	LRT to Crown Farm, LSC, and Kentlands
AA5	BRT to Crown Farm, LSC, and Kentlands
AA6	LRT to Crown Farm and LSC with at-grade crossings of Key West Avenue and the intersection of Great Seneca Highway and Key West Avenue
AA7	LRT on MP alignment with circulator bus through LSC
AA8	BRT on MP alignment with alternating buses through LSC

Environmental Concerns

The NEPA process was enacted to insure that environmental impacts be identified and addressed for all federally funded projects. As it has been assumed that transportation improvements in the study area would involve Federal funding, it is important that environmental concerns be studied and documented. For this purpose, a planning-level analysis of potential impacts to environmental/community resources was conducted. This means that the analysis was not conducted to the level of detail required of NEPA documents, which includes the need for extensive data collection and analysis. Rather, the analysis of possible impacts used available secondary sources provided by Montgomery County. This type of analysis is typically referred to as a “fatal flaw” analysis—an analysis conducted to identify whether there are resources present that could be impacted to a level that could potentially influence decisions on alignment. The quantitative findings of this analysis are presented in Table S-3.

Figure S-1: Alternative Alignments



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Federal laws protecting significant historic properties and community resources (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (as amended) and Section 4f of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 specify that a resource be protected if a feasible alternative is possible. Section 106 specifies that a resource needs to be assessed based upon its current features and not those assumed through development plans. Both the Crown Farm and Belward Farm properties have been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historical Places. The alternative alignments show decreased impacts to the Crown Farm, a resource for which land development plans that could alter the character and historic value of the place are more advanced and for which previous studies have shown the presence of no feasible and prudent alternatives to serve the site. However, substantially increased impacts are present to the Belward Farm over what are present for the Master Plan alternative. Should it be determined that alignments serving the LSC are preferred for future development, the MTA will continue to work with representatives from Montgomery County and the Maryland Historical Trust to identify and assess alternatives that serve the LSC but which avoid the Belward Farm property.

Cost

Capital and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs for the alternatives were calculated using methodologies similar to those used for the alternatives in the AA/EA document. These methodologies are consistent with FTA guidance and requirements for cost estimation for major transit New Starts projects. Capital costs and O&M costs are important inputs to the calculation of Cost-Effectiveness as defined by FTA New Starts criteria.

Overall, the project alternatives show fairly substantial increases in project costs, reflecting the increases in alignment distances of the proposed alignment alternatives, as well as the additional station that is proposed. In the case of projects serving the new Crown Farm development and the Life Sciences Center, capital costs using the same 2007 unit costs increase just under \$100 million from \$875.5 million for the Master Plan alignment to \$972.5 for LRT and increase \$44 million for BRT from \$461 million for the Master Plan alignment to \$505 million. Alignments serving the Kentlands in addition to these destinations are \$999 million for LRT, approaching FTA's \$1 billion threshold for the definition of a "mega project", and \$533 million for BRT. Capital costs reported for the LRT & BRT Master Plan Alternatives reflect adjustments made to vehicle requirements for each alternative to more accurately meet the operating needs of these services. Costs reported will go up again when the unit costs are inflated to 2009 or 2010 values. 2007 values were used to provide a direct comparison with the BRT and LRT costs reported in the AA/EA.

Transportation Performance

The travel demand analysis of the alignment alternatives used the same travel demand model as that used for the alternatives in the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study AA/EA, modified to include current land use forecasts for the build horizon year 2030. Specifically, the MDAA Phase I model (Version 3, dated 02/05/08) used for analysis of the CCT in the AA/EA was updated to include the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) new round of land use forecasts (Round 7.2a), reflecting modified land use data and assumptions provided by each of the counties in the region, and coded network changes to include the new alignment and station locations.

The travel demand model was used to estimate potential ridership on the CCT as well as other measures used as a basis for measuring the cost-effectiveness of the project, a measure of performance critical for successful entry in the FTA New Starts process. An adjustment was made to the modeling results used to estimate travel time benefits for users of the transportation system (user benefits), an important input to the calculation of

project cost-effectiveness. This adjustment applies quantitative values to something referred to as "mode-specific attributes", perceived qualities of a given public transit mode that users feel they receive in using it such as amenities, comfort, reliability, and other similar characteristics. To ensure an accurate analysis of the Master Plan alternatives against the alignment alternatives, the mode-specific attributes were applied to all alternatives. As a result, the user benefits have increased and the cost-effectiveness has decreased for Alternatives 6A and 6B from the original AA/EA document.

The results of ridership and cost-effectiveness calculations for the project are shown in Table S-2. The table includes a revised analysis of the costs and benefits of the BRT and LRT alternatives using the Master Plan alignment from the AA/EA using the model with the round of land use forecasts included in the AA/EA document.

As shown by the table, transit ridership and cost-effectiveness of both modes improve modestly with the revised alignments to service the new proposed developments at Crown Farm, the Life Sciences Center, and Kentlands. According to these results, the LRT alternatives would rate "Medium" and BRT alternatives "High" against FTA cost-effectiveness thresholds. Although cost-effectiveness only counts towards 20 percent of a project's total New Starts project rating, a project must have a Medium rating in cost-effectiveness to advance into the New Starts program.

Table S-2: Estimated Ridership and New Transit Trips

	Alternative	Boardings (thousands)	Cost-Effectiveness
AA/EA	6-TSM-TSM	7	N/A
	6A-LRT	24-30	\$24.00-\$30.00
	6B-BRT	21-26	\$11.21-13.93
Modified Master Plan	AA7-LRT (Master Plan w/ LSC Circulator Service)	30-38	\$18.06-\$22.62
	AA8-BRT(Master Plan w/ Alternating LSC Service)	26-33	\$8.37-\$10.47
Crown Farm and LSC	AA1-TSM	9-12	N/A
	AA2-LRT	34-43	\$16.04-\$20.05
	AA3-BRT	30-37	\$7.43-\$9.26
	AA6-LRT	33-41	\$17.00-\$21.00
Crown Farm, LSC and Kentlands	AA4-LRT	34-42	\$16.86-\$21.14
	AA5-BRT	29-37	\$8.11-\$10.13

Findings Summary

The technical findings for this project have been summarized in Table S-3.

The MTA completed this study for the purpose of informing decisions for the selection of a preferred alignment alternative for the CCT. Both LRT and BRT alternatives were studied on alignment alternatives to the Master Plan alignment designed to service new targeted growth areas in the corridor. The data and information presented in this report should meet

this purpose. A review and analysis of the information has led MTA to make the following general conclusions about the alternatives.

- Round 7.2a travel demand forecasts, which include considerable increases in development along the CCT corridor have modest impacts on ridership and user benefits as determined by comparisons of the forecasts of the Master Plan alternatives from the AA/EA with the alternative alignments analyzed in this report.
- Additional ridership and cost-effectiveness benefits are generated by the new alignments serving the LSC and Crown Farm areas. It is therefore considered beneficial for the CCT to apply alignment modifications to those areas.
- Service to the Kentlands is slightly more expensive and results in slightly less ridership and cost-effectiveness as determined by the current models.
- The new alignment alternatives result in very few additional environmental impacts based on the conceptual level of analysis conducted for this study. An exception to that is with the potential impacts to resources that have been determined to be eligible for the National Historical Register, particularly the Belward Farm. Should an alignment be selected that affects the Belward Farm, MTA will need to identify potential options for avoiding the resource in consultation with the Maryland Historical Trust. These options may affect the location of the LSC Belward station and the quality of service to the Belward campus of the LSC.

These findings must be presented in context of the level of detail of this technical analysis. The following notes summarize important considerations for results presented above:

- Updated information is provided in this report for the Master Plan alternatives reported in the AA/EA reflecting updated analyses of costs and benefits. The Master Plan alternatives assume previous land use in the travel demand model that matches the current Master Plan. This allows for a direct comparison of the new alternatives with the anticipated land use changes against the previous Master Plan alternatives under the land use in the current Master Plan.
- Selecting a locally preferred alternative will require the MTA to engage in additional public involvement with affected communities to gauge the preferences and discuss the concerns of affected communities and riders for these alternatives as required by Federal law.
- The model used for this study was applied for the purposes of comparing an order-of-magnitude performance among the alternatives. The travel demand model used for these analyses would not meet FTA requirements for travel demand analyses of transit New Starts projects. A new "Phase II" model is being developed for the Purple Line and CCT projects that will incorporate FTA requirements for the model. Although the modeling results of this analysis show definitively improved performance of the CCT alternatives under the enhanced land use assumptions, MTA urges caution in interpreting results for individual alternatives and individual modes.
- The costs of building and operating the alternatives have increased substantially over the Master Plan alignment alternatives reported in the AA/EA. Capital costs use \$2007 unit costs, which will need to be adjusted to 2009 or 2010 values. These cost increases affect the overall affordability of the project and will affect the cost-effectiveness ratings that a selected alternative might receive once a revised travel demand model is applied.

Table S-3: Alternative Alignment Summary Table

I-270 Multi-Modal Corridor Study
Light Rail and Bus Rapid Transit

	COMSAT to Shady Grove: Master Plan				COMSAT to Shady Grove: Crown Farm and Life Sciences Center				COMSAT to Shady Grove: Crown Farm, Life Sciences Center and Kentlands	
	BA - LRT	GB - BRT	AA7 - LRT	AA8 - BRT	AA9 - LRT	AA10 - BRT	AA11 - LRT	AA12 - BRT	AA13 - LRT	AA14 - BRT
Capital Costs and Cost Effectiveness										
Capital Costs (millions)	\$875.65	\$461.24	\$887.42	\$437.87	\$124.88	\$972.63	\$505.15	\$933.65	\$999.01	\$532.63
Annual Operating Costs (millions)	\$25.52	\$25.22	\$25.80	\$27.77	\$20.53	\$26.42	\$25.88	\$26.51	\$26.95	\$26.35
High Cost Effectiveness	\$24.00	\$11.21	\$18.06	\$5.37		\$16.04	\$7.43	\$17.07	\$18.86	\$6.11
Low Cost Effectiveness	\$30.00	\$13.93	\$22.82	\$10.47		\$20.05	\$8.26	\$21.33	\$21.14	\$10.13
Annual User Benefit Hrs (millions)	High \$4.59	\$4.65	\$5.85	\$6.18	\$2.28	\$6.78	\$6.84	\$8.33	\$6.72	\$6.78
	Low \$3.66	\$3.72	\$4.68	\$4.85	\$1.83	\$5.43	\$5.49	\$5.07	\$5.37	\$5.43
Ridership Forecasting										
Guideway Boardings (Thousands)	30	27	30 - 38	26 - 33	9 - 12	34 - 43	30 - 37	33 - 41	34 - 42	29 - 37
New Transit Trips (Thousands)	8.8	9.4	9 - 11.3	10.1 - 12.7	7.3 - 9.8	11.4 - 14.2	12.0 - 15.1	12.8 - 13.9	11.2 - 14.0	11.9 - 14.9
Service Operations										
Run-Time COMSAT to Shady Grove (min)	36.0	38.1	36.0	50.8	89.7	43	46.3	45.9	43.7	48.4
Avg Speed (MPH)	22.2	21.0	22.2	17.8	16.4	20.2	18.6	18.0	20.6	18.6
Distance (miles)	13.3	13.3	13.3	15.1	19.0	14.5	14.5	14.5	15.0	15.0
# Stations (Study Area)	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Stations Served with Study Area										
Washington	X	X	X	X						
DANAC	X	X	X	X						
Deerley	X	X	X	X						
Quince Orchard	X	X	X	X						
Crown Farm					X	X	X	X		X
LSC West					X	X	X	X	X	X
LSC Central					X	X	X	X	X	X
LSC Belward					X	X	X	X	X	X
Kentlands									X	X
Environmental Considerations: (For segments identified below, only)										
	From Omega Drive/Fields Road to Quince Orchard Road/Twin Lakes Drive				From Omega Drive/Fields Road to Muddy Branch Road/Great Seneca Station				From Muddy Branch Road/Great Seneca to Quince Orchard Road/Twin Lakes Drive	
Noise										
Potential Sensitive Receptors	1	3	1	0		4	0	4	2	0
Floodplains ¹										
# Crossings		3					2			4
Area (Acres)		141					0.23			1.98
Length (Miles)		n/a					0.66			1.06
Wetlands ²										
# Crossings		2					3			-
Area (Acres)		n/a					0.870			-
Stream										
# Crossings		n/a					5			3
Community/Cultural Resource Impacts										
National Register/Eligible Historic Sites		Crown Farm Belward Farm					Crown Farm Belward Farm			-
(acres)		4.07					7.43			-
Parkland Impacts (Acres)		2.35					-			5.84
Areas of Concern (Number of Structures) ³										
Residential		-					7			3
Commercial		-					2			0
Government & Institutional		-					2			0
Industrial		-					1			0

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Notes:
1) Flood Plain Length is cumulative
2) Wetlands identified include 2009 groundmapping conducted by MTA
3) Areas of Concern represent structures located completely, partially or very close to the transitway footprint

Table 4 presents the cost-effectiveness thresholds FTA is using in FY 2010 for assigning a High, Medium-High, Medium, Medium-Low or Low cost effectiveness rating for each proposed project. FTA publishes updates to these breakpoints annually to reflect the impact of inflation. FTA requires a project to achieve a "Medium" rating in order to proceed in the FTA New Starts process. Additionally, a project's cost-effectiveness counts for 20 percent of a project's overall rating for New Starts. These ratings are used for the purposes of making funding recommendations to Congress for the discretionary New Starts transit project program.

Table 4: Cost-Effectiveness Thresholds

Cost Effectiveness Rating	Cost Effectiveness Value
High	less than or equal to \$11.99
Medium-High	between \$12.00 and \$15.99
Medium	between \$16.00 and \$24.49
Medium-Low	between \$24.50 and \$30.49
Low	greater than or equal to \$30.51

Table 5 summarizes the cost-effectiveness calculations for the alternatives. As shown, each of the alignment alternatives is compared to the TSM alternative. With this comparison, the FTA is determining whether the cost of a fixed guideway system is worth the investment. The table shows that the BRT alternatives are more cost-effective than the LRT alternatives and that there are higher user benefits from serving the LSC and Crown Farm areas for both BRT and LRT alternatives than with the original Master Plan alignment. Moving the Quince Orchard station to the west side of Great Seneca Highway to more directly serve the Kentlands (AA4 and AA5) is not as cost-effective as the original location on the Master Plan because the additional travel time appears to inconvenience passengers from north of Quince Orchard and the capital cost is higher.

Table 5: Cost-Effectiveness

	Alternative Description	Capital Costs	Annual Operating Costs	Annual User Benefit Hours	Cost Effectiveness
AA/EA	6-TSM	\$118,636,000	\$19,791,000	1,500,000-1,890,000	
	6A	\$875,650,000	\$25,523,000	3,660,000-4,590,000	\$24.00-\$30.00
	6B	\$461,240,000	\$25,224,000	3,720,000-4,650,000	\$11.21-\$13.93
Modified Master Plan	AA7-LRT	\$887,420,000	\$25,596,000	4,680,000-5,850,000	\$18.06-\$22.62
	AA8-BRT	\$467,870,000	\$27,774,000	4,950,000-6,180,000	\$8.37-\$10.47
Crown Farm and LSC	AA2-LRT	\$972,630,000	\$26,416,000	5,430,000-6,780,000	\$16.04-\$20.05
	AA3-BRT	\$505,150,000	\$25,984,000	5,490,000-6,840,000	\$7.43-\$9.26
	AA6-LRT	\$933,550,000	\$26,000,000	5,070,000-6,330,000	\$17.01-\$21.33
Crown Farm, LSC and Kentlands	AA4-LRT	\$999,010,000	\$26,945,000	5,370,000-6,720,000	\$16.86-\$21.14
	AA5-BRT	\$532,630,000	\$26,346,000	5,430,000-6,780,000	\$8.11-\$10.13



MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Martin O'Malley, Governor • Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Beverley K. Swaim-Staley, Secretary • Paul J. Wiedefeld, Administrator

October 26, 2009

Mr. Rollin Stanley
Planning Director
Montgomery County Planning Department
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Stanley:

In addition to information previously provided to the Montgomery County Council in anticipation of its consideration of the proposed Gaithersburg West Master Plan (GWMP), the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) has new information about the feasibility of the DANAC Station on the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) that may be of interest to you.

As part of the plan, the Montgomery County Planning Department recommended a re-alignment of the CCT that was presented in the February 2009 Public Hearing Draft. This plan did not include a DANAC station. However, the July 2009 Planning Board Draft GWMP did include a station in the vicinity to support existing and future development in the area referred to as LSC North. In response, MTA considered a transit station along the east side of Diamondback Drive in conjunction with the alignment we had developed based on the Public Hearing Draft. We concluded at that time that because the station area would be surrounded on three sides by retaining walls as high as 25 feet, the station would be unsafe, would not serve adjacent land uses and was therefore infeasible. Our conclusion was reported to Planning Department staff.

Recently, however, MTA considered a different alignment for the CCT that travels along the west side of Decoverly Drive and places the station on the DANAC property along Diamondback Drive. This alignment would not require retaining walls to the same degree and would allow an open graded area facing the future DANAC development. Planning Department staff assessed potential ridership at this station and believes that it would increase CCT ridership by 500-600 daily boardings. MTA has estimated the capital cost for this alignment shift to be approximately \$12 million. A cost effectiveness analysis must still be conducted, but MTA believes it is likely to be positive.

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Mr. Rollin Stanley
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MTA therefore concludes a station on the DANAC property is feasible. Please feel free to use this information as development of the plan continues. If you have any questions, please contact me at 410-767-3787 or by email at dratcliff@mtamaryland.com.

Sincerely,



Diane Ratcliff, Director
Office of Planning

cc: Mr. Donald Halligan, Director, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, Maryland
Department of Transportation
Mr. Rick Kiegel, Corridor Cities Transitway Project Manager, Office of Planning,
MTA