



# Montgomery County Council

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**For Immediate Release**

**July 15, 2003**

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## **COUNCIL TO STATE: NO TO BUSWAY ON JONES BRIDGE ROAD**

The Montgomery County Council soundly and unanimously rejected a proposed dedicated busway to run along Jones Bridge Road as one option for the Inner Purple Line/Bi-County Transitway, citing a Park and Planning Commission study which judged the project as not cost-effective, injurious to adjoining neighborhoods, and ineffective in linking Silver Spring and Bethesda with rapid transit.

The Council urged the state of Maryland to cease studying the Jones Bridge Road option and to move ahead instead on other mass transit options sooner. The Council is on record, by a 7-2 majority, as favoring light rail along the Georgetown Branch right-of-way.

"The Jones Bridge Road alternative does not connect our two principal urban areas, it would be a serious safety hazard for area schoolchildren, and it would actually aggravate traffic congestion," said Councilmember George Leventhal. "Studying it will cost us years of delay and lots of tax dollars, down the drain."

"This busway proposal is a non-starter," said Councilmember Nancy Floreen, chair of the Transportation and Environment Committee. "It doesn't meet the needs of commuters and would very seriously impact a neighborhood. This unanimous vote sends a clear message to the State that the busway is a bust."

"There's a state budget deficit out there," said Councilmember Tom Perez. "The State shouldn't waste money on an approach that nobody wants – not the business community, not the neighborhoods, and not County residents who desperately need more transportation options."

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*Attached find a copy of the Council's resolution, sent to the State of Maryland*

Resolution No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: July 15, 2003  
Adopted: July 15, 2003

COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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By: Transportation and Environment Committee

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Subject: Recommendation to cease study of Bi-County Transitway (Purple Line) Bus Rapid Transit on Jones Bridge Road

Background

1. In March 2003 the Maryland Department of Transportation announced that it would be studying Jones Bridge Road as a route for a busway or bus rapid transit (BRT) line as part of the Bi-County Transitway (Purple Line) between Bethesda and New Carrollton.
2. On March 26, 2003 the Council President requested that the Planning Board review the concept, noting that “a full review of this alternative may delay the project for years.”
3. The Planning Board staff completed its study on June 20, 2003 and the Board held a public forum on the study on June 26, 2003. The Board held a worksession on July 10, 2003 and recommended that the Council advise the State to cease further examination of the Jones Bridge Road as a route option for BRT.
4. On July 15, 2003 the Transportation and Environment (T&E) Committee was briefed by the Planning Board and staff and heard comments from the Maryland Transit Administration. The T&E Committee concurs with the Planning Board for the following reasons:
  - The option does not go directly to the Bethesda Business District, where half of westbound passengers on this portion of the future Bi-County Transitway are ultimately destined.
  - The option would be much less cost-effective than other options already studied.
  - The option is not part of the County’s master plan, so no effected residents or businesses have had due notice of it.
  - The option would significantly change the character of Jones Bridge Road, particularly east of Connecticut Avenue where it is a residential street.
  - The option would take property from—and hamper access to—many homes on Jones Bridge Road as well as North Chevy Chase Elementary School.

- The option depends on concurrence from either the National Naval Medical Center or the National Institutes of Health to place a new station within its property, which is extremely unlikely in the context of ongoing security concerns.
- The option is opposed by such disparate groups as the Town of North Chevy Chase, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, the North Chevy Chase PTA, and hundreds of other groups and individuals who have corresponded to the Planning Board or the Council.

### Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

The Council strongly urges that the Maryland Department of Transportation immediately cease its study of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Jones Bridge Road.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

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Mary A. Edgar, CMC  
Clerk of the Council