

MoCo, State Come To Agreement On Controversial Stretch Of Old Georgetown Road

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Montgomery County says it's come to an agreement with the State Highway Administration on a stretch of White Flint area road that caused controversy earlier this year.

County Executive Isiah Leggett announced today that the state will allow the county to reduce the number of lanes on Old Georgetown Road in the [recently rebranded Pike District](#) to make it easier to cross for pedestrians.

The county's Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will also be able to build the on-road bike lanes recommended by the 2010 White Flint Sector Plan.

In September, then-Friends of White Flint Executive Director Lindsay Hoffman [criticized MCDOT](#) for preliminary designs that would've kept the existing three thru lanes in each direction and a turn lane for much of the length of Old Georgetown Road between Grand Park Avenue (the new entrance of the Pike & Rose project) and Hoya Street.

County officials said they're hands were tied because SHA controls decisions on lane configurations and construction permits for the state road.

The county also said its plan was to go forward with the eight-lane redesign and then rebuild the road again with fewer lanes once traffic levels allowed for it.

But after months of discussions and [a capital budget amendment](#) that would've blocked any redesign not

meeting the Sector Plan recommendations, the county went back to SHA with a new traffic study and another solution:

After the additional funding was approved, MCDOT provided a supplemental traffic analysis to SHA that justified its request to reduce the number of lanes to help achieve the vision of the Sector Plan. After thorough analysis, SHA agreed that the Hoya Street connection will provide enough traffic relief to move ahead with narrowing that segment of Old Georgetown Road sooner than originally planned, and has approved MCDOT's request.

Connecting Hoya Street to the Old Georgetown Road and Executive Boulevard intersection will allow vehicle traffic heading to and from Rockville Pike a way to bypass Old Georgetown Road.

Heavy traffic volume on that stretch of Old Georgetown Road was the primary reason the SHA cited for not reducing the number of lanes.

“I want to thank our partners at the State Highway Administration for working with MCDOT and my office in approving a forward thinking solution that helps us reach our goal of creating a more walkable and bikable community in White Flint — right from the start,” Leggett said in a press release.

In [a letter sent to Leggett](#) in September, a group of 15 organizations called for a review of MCDOT's policies for White Flint, more cooperation between the department and local stakeholders and a letter to state transportation officials emphasizing the importance of a four-thru lane Old Georgetown Road.