

## Responses to Questions regarding the Purple Line and Associated Projects

On September 28 the County Council's Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment (T&E) Committee invited staffs from the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP), and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to a meeting to answer questions regarding the implementation of the Purple Line and its associated projects: the Bethesda Metro Station Southern Entrance, the Capital Crescent Trail between Bethesda and Silver Spring (including the Interim Trail during construction), and the Silver Spring Green Trail along Wayne Avenue east to Sligo Creek Park. The staffs have provided written responses to the questions, below:

### **OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- 1. How often will each of the Community Advisory Teams (CATs) covering parts of Montgomery County convene? Please provide a list of the members of each team and who they represent. Will minutes of each meeting be kept and posted? Will the meetings be open to anyone to attend? If so, will non-members be able to participate or simply observe?*

**Response:** It is anticipated that the CATs will meet approximately monthly, depending on the schedule and level of construction activity with each CAT area. The first meeting will be our Bethesda/Chevy Chase Community Advisory Team on October 17<sup>th</sup> at Bethesda Chevy Chase High School from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Meeting invitations for that first CAT meeting were e-mailed to members this week. Additional CAT meetings are currently being scheduled. Meeting summaries will be made available. We have set up the CATs to work specifically with designated neighborhood representatives. However, we will have some limited additional seating for members of the public. As time permits, we will entertain questions and comments from the public at the end of the meetings.

- 2. Project information will be posted on the [www.purplelinemd.com](http://www.purplelinemd.com) website (see ©1-3). How detailed and neighborhood-specific will this information be? Which types of questions should be directed to Joy Hamilton at PurpleLineMD and which to Carla Julian at PLTP? At any one time, how far into the future will the detailed schedule of construction activities be shown? How often will the detailed schedules be updated on the website? There is a Construction Hotline: (240) 424-5325; all other general inquiries/questions about Purple Line information are directed to (443) 451-3706. Are there any other means planned for outreach of specific schedule information that would affect residents and businesses?*

**Response:** General project inquiries should go to our MTA project outreach team at (443) 451-3706. Construction inquiries should be directed to the Construction Hotline at (240) 424-5325. Notifications will be posted on the project website [www.purplelinemd.com](http://www.purplelinemd.com) and disseminated via social media, text, email or automatic call. Members of the public are encouraged to sign up to receive these notifications in the format they prefer, and for the areas of the project which interest them.

- 3. What are the procedures for communicating to the public, regularly, about what to expect in terms of noise, closures, planned activity? Once a week, in writing on a dedicated web site, would be ideal. Weather and other variables may cause those plans to change. MTA/PLTP can update the website. There needs to be a protocol established and an expectation of communication.*

**Response:** Notifications will be posted on the website at purplelinemd.com and disseminated via social media, text, email, or automatic call. Members of the public should sign up to receive these notifications in the format they prefer, and for the areas of the project which interest them. Depending on the type of roadway impact, Variable Message Signs may be used as well.

4. *How have small businesses, schools, and daycares adjacent and very close to the project been notified of construction impacts (timing, noise, dust, road and sidewalk closures)? Can neighbors have access to the notification/information that has been provided to those entities (since we are customers, have children in the schools and daycares, and use those roads and sidewalks too)?*

**Response:** We would like to thank the Montgomery County Law Enforcement who along with us, has reached out to the schools and daycare facilities in the area adjacent to the trail.

5. *How will residents be notified of road and sidewalk closures? Will there be an updated online map giving people notice of those locations ahead of time to avoid?*

**Response:** Notifications will be posted on the website at purplelinemd.com and disseminated via social media, text, email or automatic call. Members of the public should sign up to receive these notifications in the format they prefer, and for the areas of the project which interest them. Depending on the type of roadway impact, Variable Message Signs may be used as well.

6. *When will the CAT for the Wayne Avenue segment start again?*

**Response:** The Community Advisory Teams (CAT) will begin in mid-October. The Wayne Avenue CAT is currently being scheduled. It will likely be in early November.

7. *Please provide a communications plan for how changes will be shared with the public. Examples of unknown items experienced to date have included trail closures, tree removal, lane closures, and house demolition. Future items may include lane closures, street closures, design changes, operational speeds, etc.*

**Response:** MTA/PLTP ask that you refer to the website, www.purplelinemd.com and go to the construction tab for notices. Also, please sign up to receive email, text or robocall information on an area of your choice for immediate notifications. Members of the CATs also will learn at the CAT meetings, early on about upcoming closures and construction activities in their specific area.

8. *What are the notice provisions and contact information for the project in the Woodside area?*

**Response:** The notice provisions for Woodside are the same as for the entire project. We encourage people to sign up on the website for notifications.

## **CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS AND TIMING**

9. *When will Construction Execution Plan documents be available to the public?*

**Response:** A draft of the Project Execution Plan (PEP) has been prepared by PLTP and it is being reviewed by the County.

10. *Which entity is responsible for each portion of construction and oversight? Can the community receive an organizational chart showing roles and responsibilities of all the officials involved with the project (MTA, DOT, State officials, County officials, PLTP officials)?*

**Response:** PLTP, with its construction group, PLTC, is constructing the project, in accordance with the P3 Agreement and the Technical provisions. PLTC will provide Quality Control and Quality Assurance. MTA will provide oversight of all plans and design/construction work. MTA also will provide Quality Assurance Oversight, and monitoring of PLTC's performance.

11. *What measures will be in place to ensure construction traffic doesn't overtake residential streets nearby? Who will oversee coordinating this with several potentially very disruptive projects all scheduled to occur in downtown Bethesda during the next several years?*

**Response:** The County has requested that MTA provide it with its current schedule and regular schedule updates. The County's intent in requesting this is to identify potential impacts, not only in Bethesda but along the entire alignment in Montgomery County. Where we have been able to identify potential conflicts between developer and Purple Line construction, there has been coordination as is the case with Carr's redevelopment of the Apex Building in Bethesda or the Elizabeth Square Development in Silver Spring. Construction traffic associated with the Purple Line project has been assigned to designated haul routes and contractors are not permitted to park on residential streets.

12. *Where are the construction staging areas? What conditions should residents expect in these areas?*

**Response:** The former shopping center on 16th Street. The same requirements about noise, dust, site cleanliness that apply to the construction of the project as a whole also apply to the staging areas.

13. *Do the construction crews plan to work 7 days a week?*

**Response:** Typically, construction activities will occur during the work week, but there will likely be exceptions. Some activities, such as the construction of the bridges over Connecticut Avenue will occur on weekends to minimize traffic impacts during the work week. In other cases, such if the project is held up by inclement weather, construction may continue on weekends to keep the project on schedule.

14. *What is the current timeline for the stages of construction?*

**Response:** Construction has started, and it will occur simultaneously throughout the project corridor for the next 4 -5 years.

15. *What are the County/State noise ordinances crews need to abide by?*

**Response:** The project will be abiding by Montgomery County noise ordinances. With the exception of construction of the Plymouth Tunnel, construction within the Silver Spring Transit Center, construction along and within the Purple Line alignment between Colesville Road and the intersection of Ramsey Avenue and Bonifant Street, and pile driving operations performed Monday through Friday pursuant to COMAR 25.02.03.02, or an approved noise waiver, the following maximum noise levels apply during construction work:

**Monday - Friday Weekends/Holidays - Residential Zones**

7 AM to 9 AM: 85 dBA  
9 AM to 7 PM: 85 dBA  
7 PM to 10 PM: 65 dBA\*  
10 PM to 7 AM: 55 dBA\*

**Monday - Friday Weekends/Holidays – Non-Residential Zones**

7 AM to 9 AM: 85 dBA  
9 AM to 7 PM: 85 dBA  
7 PM to 10 PM: 67 dBA\*  
10 PM to 7 AM: 52 dBA\*

**Weekends/Holidays – Residential Zones \*\***

7 AM to 9 AM: 55 dBA  
9 AM to 7 PM: 65 dBA  
7 PM to 10 PM: 65 dBA  
10 PM to 7 AM: 55 dBA

**Weekends/Holidays – Non-Residential Zones \*\***

7 AM to 9 AM: 62 dBA  
9 AM to 7 PM: 67 dBA  
7 PM to 10 PM: 67 dBA  
10 PM to 7 AM: 62 dBA

\* or ambient dBA, whichever is higher, and up to 85 dBA with approved Noise Waiver

\*\* or ambient dBA, whichever is higher

*16. Who should people call when there are suspected noise, storm water run-off, and pollution violations during the project? Can MTA/PLTP publish/post their information/complaint line prominently throughout the worksites?*

**Response:** People can call either MTA at 443-451-3706 or PLTP Construction Hotline at 240-424-5325. The project phone numbers are posted along the alignment on the project signage, and on the website.

*17. Who will be conducting proactive oversight to ensure compliance with all local laws and regulations?*

**Response:** PLTC's quality team oversight team will provide oversight for the work. MTA will provide Quality Assurance Oversight above that. The County will be monitoring as well.

*18. What immediate erosion control measures in addition to silt fence is planned? Who is monitoring the sediment levels in Coquelin Run and Rock Creek?*

**Response:** PLTP earthen dikes as well as other construction mitigation measures will be installed as necessary such as retention ponds. Erosion monitoring is a joint PLTP/MTA effort.

*19. What will the vibration impacts be from construction and final design on nearby homes?*

**Response:** Vibration analysis is currently undergoing design review. Questions regarding the potential for vibration impacts at a specific area should be submitted to the MTA or PLTC Outreach Team.

20. *What air monitoring they have done and will continue to do to measure the changes in air quality from before construction to during and afterwards?*

**Response:** Dust control will be carried out in accordance with the P3 Agreement and monitored by the project team throughout the construction phase. If a resident has a concern about dust control, they should contact the construction hotline.

21. *Measurements including dust, exhaust, etc. And where will those readings be posted?*

**Response:** Dust is measured according to the P3 requirements. There are no measurements of exhaust.

22. *What are the evacuation plans if the hazardous materials become unearthed during construction?*

**Response:** The plans are in accordance with the Hazard Mitigation requirements of the P3 contract requirements.

23. *What temporary sound barriers, as common with large loud construction sites will be erected? This is an example: [www.acousticalcontrol-llc.com](http://www.acousticalcontrol-llc.com). Their phone number is 817-320-9252.*

**Response:** The use of temporary noise barriers is generally not anticipated, with the exception at the eastern tunnel portal in Long Branch.

24. *Have all the wildlife been relocated as was done with the ICC before clearing?*

**Response:** There are no requirements to relocate wildlife for the Purple Line.

25. *[Paraphrase] Members of the Sligo-Branview Civic Association report that a large truck carrying what appeared to them to be a temporary office trailer drove down the residential portion of Flower Avenue. Purple Line construction vehicles have designated haul routes, which generally do not include residential streets. Can we re-confirm that all personnel and Purple Line related contractors, especially those driving big, heavy, noisy vehicles, will not be driving down residential streets? What steps will you take to make sure that this communication truly trickles down to all the drivers on this big project so that more trucks don't come down their streets?*

**Response:** Trucking firms are provided route information that they must travel on. The truck driver and firm were counselled to ensure that correct routes are driven in compliance with the approved routing plans (which do not include the segment of Flower Avenue in the incident described).

*Please discuss the plans for work on Arliss Street and on Wayne Avenue. What is the schedule for such work? What impact on traffic? What options are there for getting around any traffic obstacles? I understand the entrance to Giant will change in phases over time. Please describe the different phases and where the entrances will exist? When the entrance is on Flower Avenue, what will be done to the hill that currently exists between Flower and Giant's parking*

*lot? What happens to the properties on Arliss Street that are either closed or impacted by the construction there? Will folks who are impacted so that they need to vacate their homes be fully compensated? What about those who lose temporary access?*

**Response:** This work has already started with the temporary closure of one of the entrances to the Giant parking lot. The work will start with a closure of one entrance which is utilized for construction of the tunnel area. The hill is being utilized as a small construction staging location. A new, temporary entrance from Flower Avenue will be built.

Arliss Street at Flower Avenue will be closed in the beginning of November. Access will be maintained to the townhomes on Arliss Street. We do not anticipate anyone needing to vacate their homes.

### **CONSTRUCTION IN THE GEORGETOWN BRANCH RIGHT-OF-WAY**

*26. Is closing the entire trail every day for several years the only possible option? Or are there alternatives available that could serve the public interest?*

**Response:** Over the course of multiple meetings during the fall and winter of 2016/2017, MDOT MTA, Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP) and Montgomery County jointly agreed that a full closure would be the preferred option for all parties for two main reasons:

First, safety is of paramount concern to all. Montgomery County was concerned about developing, signing, and publishing multiple detour routes that would change as various sections opened and closed. This presented a real risk of people being confused about what section was open or closed at any given time.

Secondly, a full closure reduces the time it takes to perform the work and allows construction of the new Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) to be completed more quickly. The full trail closure allows longer sections to be used for hauling/staging/delivery of material and equipment, which improves productivity.

PLTP plans to perform all necessary tree clearing along the Interim Georgetown Branch Trail within the first six months of starting construction. Once the trees are removed, the trail will no longer be safe for public use as PLTP anticipates working in most sections of the trail simultaneously.

*27. Students---of high school age, and also children---are continuing to use the Trail, often taking fences and other barriers as challenges to climb around and over. They are doing so, because alternatives for them to get to school are unreasonable and unsafe. What are you planning to do to address this problem? Can the students expect to encounter barbed wire topped fences in the future? Electrified fences? Will you be calling on the local police to arrest high school students crossing the Trail to get to school?*

**Response:** The closure of the trail is done because the trail is an active construction site. This is not a safe environment for the general public. The last thing we want is for someone to get hurt on the site, and we are sure that the public will agree that this should be everyone's priority. We have partnered with Montgomery law enforcement to assist with keeping everyone safe, and allowing only those whom are qualified and constructing the project to be in the construction zone.

28. *Can the County/MTA/PLTP provide access to cross the trail at least in one place like at Lynn Drive or Pearl Street? This would make it MUCH easier for people and kids to bike/walk to the CCT trailhead and downtown Bethesda during the 5 years of construction (especially with other construction planned in the area).*

**Response:** Please see the previous responses.

29. *Will the trail be built in segments simultaneously with the completion of the tracks or will it be constructed separately after all track work is complete?*

**Response:** The current plan is to build simultaneously where possible and sequentially where needed.

30. *What is the earliest date that the trail (including the Wisconsin Avenue tunnel and surface trail along Bethesda Avenue) will be complete and open to use? What is the outside date that the trail (including the Wisconsin Avenue tunnel and surface trail along Bethesda Avenue) will be complete and open?*

**Response:** It is not possible to determine at this point how early the trail could be open, construction is dependent on numerous factors such as utility relocations, unknown utilities, inclement weather, etc. However, PLTP and MTA are both very aware of the public desire to reopen the trail as soon as possible, and we will strive to open the trail as soon as possible.

31. *Could there be a temporary bridge constructed from Pearl Street to Elm Street park for bikers and walkers?*

**Response:** There is no funding in the project budget for a temporary bridge.

32. *What is being done to coordinate Purple Line construction with other Bethesda development in this same time period?*

**Response:** PLTP is obligated to work with other developers in the corridor and is currently doing so with Carr (the Apex Building) and Chevy Chase Land Company (Chevy Chase Lake development).

33. *What measures will be in place to ensure construction traffic doesn't overtake residential streets nearby? Who will oversee coordinating this with several potentially very disruptive projects all scheduled to occur in downtown Bethesda during the next several years?*

**Response:** Routes for construction traffic have been planned and identified, and coordinated with the County. Every effort will be made to avoid residential streets to minimize impacts to the travelling public.

34. *I heard third-hand that the exhorted noise levels were to be about 10 dBA higher than the original evaluations.*

- *Can you confirm if this is correct?*

**Response:** No, this is not correct.

- *Can you provide a profile of what the current expected noise levels?*

**Response:** The noise levels for construction will be accordance with the Montgomery County requirements.

- *Can you provide a plan to keep the noise levels within state noise regulations?*

**Response:** Noise mitigation during construction will follow the Montgomery County requirements.

## **TRAIL ACCESS, FEATURES, AND DESIGN**

35. *Does the trail switch from the East Bethesda side to the Town of Chevy Chase side at some point and if so, where is this planned?*

**Response:** The trail crosses to the south side of the tracks near Pearl street via an overpass, and just east of Rock Creek back to the south side of the tracks via an underpass.

36. *Many suggestions have been offered to County DOT as to how to improve the currently designated interim trail, as well as identifying a second route through the Chevy Chase. (The Chevy Chase municipalities may wish to give a statement at this meeting.) What is County DOT's process and time-frame for identifying interim trail improvements?*

**Response:** The County has received many good suggestions and have implemented changes as a result of suggestions received and other improvements identified by our engineers as a result of our review of the route. We are also continuing to work with the Town of Chevy Chase on a southern route for the alignment. As suggestions are received, staff reviews them in the field. These are categorized into improvements that can be made immediately, improvements that can be implemented in the coming weeks or months and improvements that will require more time or resources to implement as part of a more comprehensive project. Examples of immediate improvements include additional signage and removal of signs that were causing confusion to users attempting to follow the alternate trail alignment. Examples of medium term improvements include rerouting the alignment through East Bethesda to allow southbound/westbound users to use Cheltenham Drive and Woodmont Avenue instead of Pearl Street and Montgomery Avenue, adding pavement markings to Pearl Street and Maryland Avenue or working with the Bethesda Urban Partnership to install bike racks on the free Bethesda Circulator, which intersects the alternate trail route. We are also reviewing master plans to determine if any portion of the bicycle or pedestrian facilities called for in the master plan can be implemented quickly. Those master plan improvements that can be implemented quickly are considered medium term improvements, while full implementation of master plan improvements are considered long term improvements. Regardless of the timeframe required to complete these, we are committed to making improvements that not only provide immediate benefit to the alternate trail route, but that also provide lasting benefit to the community.

37. *Many of us have enjoyed the use of the Georgetown Branch trail as a recreational trail (e.g. for running, walking, etc.) because of the scenery, quiet, shade, crushed stone surface, and connections to Rock Creek Park and CCT. The new trial to be built will be very different in character.*

*How will the MTA and PLTP ensure that the new trail will continue to be a high quality*



*recreational trail? It seems so much of the focus has been on bicycle commuters, but there is a whole another set of recreational trail users and we should not be left behind.*

**Response:** The CCT is being constructed in accordance with the requirements set forth in the contract documents and in close coordination with Montgomery County staff. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation has been closely involved in the design and requirements related to the trail.

*38. Where will trail users have access to the completed trail? How will Edgevale residents enter the new Trail?*

**Response:** Edgevale residents will have access at Sleaford Road and Kentbury Drive, the same locations where they do today. The following is the full list of trail access points:

- Woodmont Plaza
- Elm Street Park
- Pearl Street
- East West Highway
- Sleaford Road
- Kentbury Drive
- Newdale Road
- Connecticut Avenue
- Jones Mill Road
- Rock Creek Trail
- Grubb Road
- Lyttonsville Place
- Stewart Avenue
- Michigan Avenue
- 4th Avenue/Hanover Street
- 4th Avenue/Talbot Avenue
- Lyttonsville Road
- 16th Street
- 3rd Avenue
- Spring Street
- Apple Avenue
- Silver Spring Transit Center
- Ripley Street

*39. What is the design/specifications of the trail? Including width, shoulder, buffer from tracks/fence impact/design of retaining walls? Are there cross-section plans and renderings available of the trail and tracks at different points along the route?*

**Response:** Where the right-of-way allows, the trail is 12 feet wide paved with a 2-foot unpaved shoulder on each side. There are portions of the trail where the right-of-way narrows and no buffer between the trail and the track exists, this has been mitigated with positive separation of either a fence or wall.

*40. What is the design/specifications of the trail (and tunnel) from the Pearl Street access point through the new trail tunnel and onto Bethesda Avenue?*

**Response:** There is a 10-foot wide connection to Pearl Street from the trail. The connection allows traffic from Pearl to enter the trail and go east or west. To the west trail users have two options: 1) cross the proposed pedestrian bridge over the tracks and ultimately into Elm Street Park; 2) utilize a sidewalk that will convey the trail users beneath the Air Rights Building on Wisconsin Ave and ultimately through to the Woodmont Plaza. It should be noted this sidewalk is not a trail and narrows as it progresses through the area at some point to a width of 5 feet.

The Carr redevelopment of the Apex Building provides a 16'-wide by 14'-high opening in which to finish a future tunnel. It does not daylight at Bethesda Avenue, rather it connects to the current Capital Crescent Trail in Woodmont Plaza. The continuation of the tunnel from Carr's eastern property line (fronting Wisconsin Avenue) under MD 355 would daylight near Elm Street Park. This future project is under design by County DOT.

*41. What safety improvements will be made to the alternate/interim trail during construction?*

**Response:** The County has already implemented a number of safety improvements both prior to the trail closure and since the trail closed, including:

- Reconstructed the Jones Bridge Road/Jones Mill Road traffic islands and crosswalks to better accommodate cyclists.
- Constructed numerous spot improvements such as grinding down grade differences in sidewalks along the route to provide a smooth ride and ensure ADA accessibility, replaced sub-standard utility patches in the sidewalk (some are complete, more are in progress), reconstructed ADA ramps, added VMS signs to alert drivers to the presence of cyclists, etc.
- Added signage to better direct users from existing trail heads to the alternate route.
- Added signage to better direct users along the alternate route.
- Removed old signs for Georgetown Branch Interim Trail that were causing confusion.
- Verified the timing of signals is adequate for pedestrians and cyclists along the route.
- Initiated a traffic study of the Pearl Street in front of Our Lady of Lourdes/BCC High School. It is nearly complete and is awaiting feedback for Our Lady of Lourdes as some improvements impact their parking. Elements of the plan include constructing missing sidewalks, sharrows on Pearl, new crosswalks, etc.
- Evaluated modifying the route for utilize Cheltenham and Woodmont. This had previously been on hold due to anticipated construction impacts associated with Marriott. We recently received Marriott's first designs and are able to route Southbound/Westbound users via this route. We are working to complete the design and implement it. We expect the design to be complete in a month or so.
- Evaluated master plan improvements on Woodmont and Montgomery to determine what portions of the master plan can be implemented.
- Added a bike lane to Pearl between Montgomery and 410.
- Worked with MNCPPC to address signing and ADA improvements in Rosemary Hills Park.
- Installing signage to add the shared use path on the north side of Jones Bridge Road to the designated route. This requires eastbound users to cross Jones Bridge Road twice at Connecticut (a signalized intersection) which is why it was not deemed a preferred route previously but is being added based on community input.
- Reviewed signage guiding trail users along the entire route as well as signage and markings that alert vehicles to the presence of cyclists. Signing and marking upgrades are under consideration for the entire route.
- Reviewed the intersection of Spencer and Grubb for potential pedestrian safety improvements. A pedestrian refuge island will be installed.

42. *Would it be possible for members of the community to meet with representatives of MCDOT/MTA about altering the route of the temporary Capital Crescent Trail, or perhaps supplementing the planned route? Whom should we contact?*

**Response:** Inquiries regarding the alternate route for the Interim Georgetown Branch Trail may be directed to Pat Shepherd, Bikeway Program Coordinator at (240) 777-7231.

43. *What are the design and safety measures for the East-West Highway/Kentbury Drive/Sleaford Road access tunnel under the trail/tracks? Are there design plans or renderings available for this location? Will there be lighting? Are there gates or access restrictions at different times?*

**Response:** Lighting for portions of the trail are included in the plans where it goes under East West Highway as well as in the pedestrian underpass at Sleaford. There are no renderings available. The plans do not include any access gates and/or restrictions that MTA/PLTP is aware of.

44. *What is now happening off of East West Highway to Sleaford Road in East Bethesda and what are the ultimate plans for the Sleaford Road right of way?*

**Response:** The current construction activities in this area are the removal of trees and the start of installation of earthen dikes. The pedestrian underpass at Sleaford will allow trail users from the south side of the alignment to get to the trail. Stairs will be built on the north side to get up the trail. People who don't want to use the stairs can walk down Kentbury Drive to the east approximately 700 feet of level access to the trail.

45. *What is the status/plan for the Lynn Drive underpass to provide access for trail users/residents/B-CC High School students to cross over to Chevy Chase?*

**Response:** As agreed to several years ago, the Purple Line project will provide an underpass for a trail connection, but connections to the actual underpass are the responsibility of the County and the Town of Chevy Chase. As the County and the Town advance their designs, MTA and PLTP will work with them.

46. *Are there any realistic visual renderings available of the trains and trail passing behind East Bethesda?*

**Response:** No, there are no current renderings.

47. *Are there any realistic auditory renderings available of the trains passing behind East Bethesda?*

**Response:** There are no auditory renderings for the vehicle being used for the Purple Line. However, the Technical Provisions proscribe strict noise level limits that the car-builder must adhere too and Purple Line operations must meet. The maximum noise limit on the car at full speed on a curve is 75 dBA.

48. *What is the current noise level we are to expect in our backyards? How far do the noise levels extend from the project?*  
- *During construction?*

- *Once the trains are operational?*
- *What is the average noise and peak noise expected (including trains, bells, and ambient)?*
- *The trees buffered noise from East-West Highway, Connecticut Avenue, and other major roadways – with many of those gone, how is that additional noise factored into your calculations?*

**Response:** Noise impact assessments and mitigation measures during both construction and operations are discussed in the FEIS, pp.4-101-4-109; and the Record of Decision, Attachment C, pp. 71-74 and pp. 101-107; in addition please see Appendix A of this ROD Attachment C , Clarification of the results of the Purple Line Noise Analysis ROD. These documents are available at [www.purplelinemd.com](http://www.purplelinemd.com).

While trees provide a good visual buffer, they don't provide a noise buffer. Noise mitigation measures include vehicle "skirts" – panels covering the wheels (since this is where light rail noise is generated) – and 4-foot noise walls adjacent to residential areas along the trail. This combination of noise walls and vehicle skirts will reduce the noise generated by approximately 12 decibels (dBA).

49. *What is the lighting plan for the trail?*

**Response:** Lighting is provided at all underpasses and trail entrances.

50. *Does a landscaping plan exist now? When can communities have a copy of the replanting/landscaping plan? Who is responsible for this component? How much is funded and is that a complete amount?*

**Response:** The corridor-wide landscaping plan is currently in the final design stage. For the area along the trail the project provided a budget for landscaping along the trail, and this was supplemented by additional funding from the County.

51. *How wide is the median between the trail and the tracks between Bethesda and Connecticut Avenue? Will it be planted/landscaped or gravel/gravel/another non-green surface? What are the plantings proposed?*

**Response:** The buffer varies by location along with the width of the right-of-way. Where feasible it is 10 feet, but at some locations there is no room for a buffer. There are some places where it is much wider, near the bridge over Connecticut Avenue and some where it is narrower, for example just east of the Air Rights Building which is tightly constrained. In all cases, there is a barrier between the tracks and the trail. In most locations, the buffer has a grass swale in it to handle drainage. Plantings will be species conducive to the swale's stormwater management function.

52. *How wide are the trail shoulders between Bethesda and Connecticut Avenue? Will the 2-foot shoulders along the trail be a good surface suitable for runners? (it is not safe or pleasant for runners to share the same asphalt path as speedy bikers, and this is a common feature of many other trails)*

**Response:** The 2-foot shoulders on each side will not be paved, and will probably be used by runners for that reason.

53. *Will MTA/PLTP provide residents tree plantings in their backyards to compensate for the loss of trees along the trail? When will this be done and how will it be coordinated?*

**Response:** The Purple Line project will not be planting trees on private property. The project includes landscaping plans for the publicly-owned property.

54. *What is the distance between the poles for the catenary wires? How tall are they?*

**Response:** Typically, catenary poles are spaced from 100 to 125 feet apart, but the alignment such as crossovers, curves will require the poles to be in closer proximity. The typical height of a pole is 22 to 36 feet tall depending on the wire height requirements as well as features such as curves and crossovers.

55. *What is the current design/specifications of the traction-power substation planned for Montgomery Avenue, and where exactly will it be located? The area between Montgomery Avenue and the Purple Line was designated in the new Bethesda Plan for a future 1.89-acre Capital Crescent Green Park. Is there a rendering of how this substation will be incorporated in this area? How will the power substation be incorporated if/when the park is built?*

**Response:** The current location of the substation is 4332 Montgomery Avenue. Although we have heard discussion of the park, we have not been provided any actual plans such as drawings layout etc.

56. *How many acres of BOTH forest stands and general tree canopy cover will be lost between Bethesda and Connecticut Avenue? How many trees over 9 inches in diameter will be cut in this area?*

**Response:** Between the Bethesda Station and Connecticut Avenue there are approximately 4.9 acres of Forest and 3.3 acres of tree canopy not included in Forest. There has not been an inventory to count trees over 9 inches in diameter that will need to be cut.

57. *Will the bike trail be wide enough for emergency vehicle access (police/ambulance)? Where are the access points for those vehicles?*

**Response:** The design of the trail and the safety requirements, including access for emergency vehicles were the subject of extensive coordination between MTA and the Montgomery County DOT, to ensure public safety.

58. *Will the new trail have water fountains and benches?*

**Response:** No, this is not in the current design requirements.

59. *Will there be a scenic overlook over Rock Creek Park on the new bridge as there currently is on the existing trestle?*

**Response:** There will be a new pedestrian bridge over the bridge. Current plans include a widening of the trail for the entire length of the bridge to allow room for people to stop on the trail, while bikers and runners continue through.

60. *Will it be possible to provide greater separation between the trail and the rail tracks wherever space permits (e.g. near Connecticut Avenue, along Coquelin Run stream, within Rock Creek Park, Lyttonsville, near 16th Street)?*

**Response:** The separation between the trail and the transit varies depending on the space available and other conditions. Between Talbot Avenue and the Silver Spring Transit Center, the trail is located on the other side of the Metro and CSX tracks from the Purple Line.

61. *Will there be green space and small parks along the trail?*

**Response:** Not as part of the project construction, but there will be landscaping.

### **TRAIL FUNDING**

62. *Is the trail completely funded? Is the Wisconsin Ave tunnel completely funded? If not, when will full funding be in place?*

**Response:** The trail is completely funded. The future tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue is funded for design only. The timing of construction funding is subject to future appropriation of funds.

63. *How much is the trail projected to cost? How much is the tunnel projected to cost?*

**Response:** The cost of the Capital Crescent Trail is \$61,197,000. There is not enough information to estimate the cost of the future tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue at this time.

64. *Who will have responsibility for maintenance of the trail/surrounding area as well as enforcement of local laws along the bicycle trail?*

**Response:** Montgomery County will be responsible for maintenance of the completed Capital Crescent Trail and Silver Spring Green Trail. County police are responsible for enforcing local laws throughout Montgomery County.

### **LYTTONSVILLE**

65. *What are the impacts of construction and final design for Rosemary Hills Elementary School? The Limit of Disturbance map indicates the project is being built very close to the school and will require the removal of many existing trees that form a buffer adjacent to the playground and school. Will there be replanting of a green buffer/shade trees in that area?*

**Response:** MTA and PLTP has worked with MCPS on this design to minimize impacts to the school. A wall will be installed at the edge of the right-of-way and the school to separate the school and the project. This wall is part of the new Talbot Avenue Bridge structure. The corridor-wide landscaping plans are going through final design at this time.

66. *What stands in the way of implementing the proposal for a revised Art-in-Transit for the Talbot Avenue Bridge elements that was proposed by Charlotte Coffield and Roger Paden? Could the County do anything to help realize this proposal?*

**Response:** The Art-In Transit program is moving forward, but this is separate from the proposal from Miss Coffield and Mr. Paden, and would not preclude their proposal, if the County were to fund it. It would require coordination with PLTC and it would require a funding source.

The County understands that PLTP and MTA have issued contracts to the selected artist; questions regarding potential changes to the Art-In-Transit program are best addressed by MTA. The County also understands the artist's work depends greatly on input from the community and will rely on the community as a source of information and photographs to document the history of the community and the importance of the bridge in that history. The County is certainly willing to work with PLTP and MTA should they decide to implement any proposals that arise from the artist's interaction with the community.

*67. What is the schedule (even if only an estimated schedule) for the construction of the new Talbot Avenue Bridge? When will it start? How long will it take? How will this be coordinated with the reconstruction of the Lyttonsville Place Bridge?*

The schedule for construction activities in the Lyttonsville/Woodside area will be presented in Lyttonsville CAT meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

*68. Would it be possible for members of the community to meet with representatives of MCDOT/MTA about some pedestrian safety and traffic calming measures surrounding the new Talbot Avenue bridge? Whom should we contact?*

**Response:** Requests for traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures in areas surrounding the new bridge should be directed to the Montgomery County Department of Transportation Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations at 240.777.2190. Additional information can be found at the following URL: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-traffic/>

*69. What will the detour routes be when the bridge is under-construction? (We would prefer that signs direct traffic around the neighborhood onto East-West Highway and 16th Street.)*

On the Lyttonsville side the detour route directs traffic to Lyttonsville Place and Brookville Road. In North Woodside, the detour directs traffic up Second Avenue to Brookville Road.

*70. Would it be possible for members of the community to meet with representatives of MCDOT/MTA about altering the route of the temporary Capital Crescent Trail, or perhaps supplementing the planned route? Whom should we contact?*

**Response:** Montgomery County DOT is responsible for the alternate trail. See the response to question #38 about changes to the alternate route.

*71. Would it be possible for members of the community to meet with representatives of MCDOT/MTA concerning some design ideas aimed at improving the aesthetics of the new bridge? Whom should we contact?*

The design of the bridge, including aesthetic treatments is included in the Technical Provisions.

## **WOODSIDE**

72. *How will traffic on 16th Street be routed during construction? Will Second Avenue be opened for cut through traffic? Who is responsible for local enforcement and street repairs if residential corridors are opened to heavy traffic?*

**Response:** The 16th Street bridge is not being replaced, so it will not be necessary to reroute traffic on to other streets. The construction of the trail on the north/east side of the CSX tracks will require use of Second Avenue for construction access to the trail site. For concerns about enforcement and damage to streets please contact the Purple Line Outreach Team.

73. *Is there a current rendering of the new bridge and supporting structures at the intersection of 16th Street and the new tracks?*

**Response:** The 16th Street bridge is not being replaced. There is not a rendering of the bridge.

74. *Has a developer been chosen to build on the site of the about to be closed shopping mall on 16th? Who? Is there a current rendering of the planned construction?*

**Response:** The current property owner has retained ownership of the parcel and will rebuild once construction of the Purple Line is complete. We are unaware of his future plans.

75. *Will the shopping center site be used as a construction staging area? What does this mean? Is there an abatement plan for noise, demolition disruption/pollution or hazardous materials found on that site?*

**Response:** A staging area is used to store the materials and equipment used for construction. As with elsewhere on the project, County noise regulations apply. Hazardous materials, should they be found, will be disposed of according to State and Federal guidelines.

76. *A bicycle path is planned. Is there a current rendering of its specifications including large berms or ramp structures that will significantly alter the local streets? Once Third Avenue is closed what are the provisions for emergency vehicle access and traffic flow along Noyes Lane, Noyes Drive and Springwood?*

**Response:** There is no rendering of the trail. There will be a ramp connection up to 16th street from the trail, but it will be in the existing grassy/vegetated area so there will not be large berms or ramp structures that would result in significant alterations to local streets. Third Avenue will not be closed; and traffic access along Noyes Lane, Noyes Drive, and Springwood Drive will not be changed.

77. *Who will have responsibility for maintenance of the trail/surrounding area as well as enforcement of local laws along the bicycle trail?*

**Response:** The completed Capital Crescent Trail will be a Montgomery County DOT facility. The County will maintain the trail area and enforce local laws.



## **TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION**

78. *How many residents will be impacted by the blasting for the Manchester tunnel at Sligo Creek?*

**Response:** We do not anticipate and homes will be damaged by blasting that may be necessary in building the Plymouth tunnel. However, as a precaution, more than 465 properties have been surveyed at this point, and we anticipate that this number may increase.

79. *Will the affected residents be formally notified that they are within blasting disturbance range?*

**Response:** At this time more than 465 residents have been contacted within the tunnel “zone of influence” where vibration impacts might occur have already been contacted. PLTP is working with residents to do a pre-construction survey, documented with photography. This survey will be used if vibration impacts are suspected, so that if found, homeowners will be compensated for any impacts.

80. *How much notice will be given before dynamite blasting begins – more than 7 days?*

**Response:** The minimum requirement is 72 hours’ notice.

81. *What protections can be taken by homeowners/residents to secure their structures?*

**Response:** There should be no protection required by residents. If they notice anything they are to immediately call the construction hotline number.

82. *Will homeowners who suffer structural damage caused by the blasting be compensated for repair costs, and if so, how?*

**Response:** As previously stated, preconstruction surveys are done with residents in the proposed area and once suspected damage is reported a review will be done to the survey data for response.

83. *For what duration of time can residents expect dynamite blasting and during what hours of the day?*

**Response:** As with all construction we plan to work during the day time hours, but it may be necessary to perform some of this activity during the evening and night hours, notification will be provided on any change in the timing of the activity.

84. *Will owners be informed exactly what will be done on the back or side of their houses (i.e., elevations or decreases in some parts of the Trail which we heard would be necessary, privacy concerns, distance from their bedrooms to the rail, etc.)? What will happen in areas where the existing trail is not wide enough? (The area from the country club to Bethesda is only a 60’ right of way - not 100’ like the rest of the trail.)*

**Response:** Individuals that have specific questions about their property should call the construction hotline number at (240) 424-5325. The 66-foot right-of-way is sufficient to accommodate both the Purple Line light rail line and the CCT.

85. *Has the State considered any kind of compensation to home owners affected by the construction and the running of the train (i.e., the loss of value of rents and of the market value of houses during construction or after; health issues, incl. lack of sleep and increase of mental conditions due to noise, vibration, lack of privacy and quality of life).*

**Response:** MTA evaluated the potential impacts of the project in the draft and final environmental impact statements. Where impacts were projected, the MTA considered whether it was possible to avoid, minimize or mitigate those impacts. Mitigation was identified in the Record of Decision.

## **LIGHT RAIL OPERATIONS**

86. *How often will trains run in each direction?*

**Response:** The frequency of the trains depends on the time of day. During peak hours, trains will run every 7.5 minutes. In future years, as ridership increases, the trains will run every 6 minutes, during peak hours. Off peak trains will run between 10 and 15 minutes apart.

87. *What hours will the trains be operational? Weekends? Weekdays?*

**Response:** Weekdays: 5 am to midnight  
Weekends: 7 am to midnight

88. *Please confirm that maximum operational speed on Wayne Avenue will be 25 mph.*

**Response:** Trains movement when not in grade-separation will travel at the posted civil speed, which for Wayne Avenue is 25 mph.

89. *Will light cycles at signalized intersections be controlled by the Purple Line (will it always be green for the Purple Line)?*

**Response:** Traffic control for the light rail vehicles will be placed in the timing circuits within the intersection, based on coordination with Montgomery County. The Purple Line vehicles will not have signal preemption. Signals along Wayne Avenue are owned by the State, but maintained and operated by the County. The signals will be phased and timed to balance traffic, pedestrian and train operations.

90. *What is the plan/design for noise mitigation along the route from Bethesda to Connecticut Avenue? What are all the noise reducing features in place for East Bethesda?*

**Response:** Four-foot noise walls will be built adjacent to residential properties along the Georgetown Branch right-of-way, and the vehicles will be equipped with skirts – panels covering the wheels where the noise is generated. This combination of noise walls and vehicle skirts will reduce the noise generated by approximately 12 decibels.

## **P3 CONTRACT**

91. *If projected ridership numbers are not met, who makes up the difference for the payments to the PL Partners and the cost of the project?*

**Response:** The Purple Line P3 contract is not tied to ridership. PLTP is not required to meet the ridership projections – but rather to provide specified services levels in terms of headways and train capacity. Funds for the project come from the Maryland Transportation Trust Fund.

92. *Who determines whether benchmarks have been met for various components of the project for the PLTP to receive incentive payments? Is there a list of those categories and what must be done to meet the benchmarks satisfactorily?*

**Response:** MTA will determine if the benchmarks have been met. The following is the list of incentive categories:

- Control of Odors and Dust
- Erosion and Sediment Control
- Public Notifications
- Noise and Vibration
- Access and Mobility
- Cleaning

The technical provisions describe the requirements for each category.

### **REAL ESTATE ACQUISITION**

93. *Please explain how the program for relocation assistance works for businesses displaced by the construction. Is there any compensation for businesses that are not displaced, but severely affected during the construction period? What has been the compensation and relocation assistance for homeowners and renters who have lost their homes due to the project?*

**Response:** The MTA's relocation program for both businesses and residents is explained in our brochure entitled "Your Relocation Assistance Rights and Benefits"

<http://www.purplelinemd.com/images/archive/brochures/MTA%20Relocation%20Brochure.pdf>

We are in communication with the County Executive's office about the need for financial and technical assistance to support potentially impacted businesses.

94. *Has eminent domain authority been delegated to PLP, and if so, how does a homeowner deny or appeal the offer for their property?*

**Response:** The State of Maryland has the authority to use eminent domain to acquire property.

95. *What plans will be made for the businesses in the 16th Street area to compensate them for the closing of their businesses due to construction? Will they be fully compensated? In Portland, the city provided low cost loans to businesses that were impacted by the construction period. Will the County do the same?*

**Response:** The MTA's relocation program for both businesses and residents is explained in our brochure entitled "Your Relocation Assistance Rights and Benefits"

<http://www.purplelinemd.com/images/archive/brochures/MTA%20Relocation%20Brochure.pdf>

MTA is in communication with the County Executive's office about the need for financial and technical assistance to support potentially impacted businesses. The Purple Line Community Development Agreement, as organized by the Purple Line Corridor Coalition, calls for an examination of the forms of assistance that can be provided to local businesses, be it from private, philanthropic or public sources.

96. *Will folks who are impacted so that they need to vacate their homes be fully compensated? What about those who lose temporary access?*

**Response:** The State negotiates real estate issues directly with property owners in accordance with law.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

97. *Green Track was eliminated by Governor Hogan yet had been advertised by MTA as a leading "green" feature of the Purple Line in the FEIS. Given that green track along the Georgetown Branch Trail section of the line would not only mitigate some stormwater runoff, some noise, and somewhat reduce the expected heat island effect, how will MTA report to the County Council the harmful consequences of eliminating Green Track from the original plan?*

**Response:** MTA will meet all stormwater management requirements. The use of green tracks was considered for use on the Purple Line. MTA did not endorse claims that the green track would reduce noise levels or that it would reduce a "heat island" effect. Green track is one possible tool in stormwater management. The use of other stormwater tools will provide equivalent water treatment.

98. *Will the State MTA explain why the project is starting in Montgomery County if there was a promise to Prince George's County and Montgomery County that the project would start in Prince George's County?*

**Response:** MTA committed to ground-breaking in Prince George's County. The actual construction schedule is determined by the duration of construction activities and the prerequisite activities.

99. *MTA determined in their 2008 DEIS that Bus Rapid Transit options were more cost-effective than Light Rail. More cost-effective alternatives were not considered in the 2013 FEIS. What's more, the Purple Line light rail is much more costly not only than BRT but also than other comparable light rail systems in the country. Now, even more cost effective (capital, cost per rider, operational cost) and less environmentally damaging options exist today. Why is the State continuing with an overpriced and environment-damaging technology when it is not necessary?*

**Response:** The decision on what mode of transportation would be used for the Purple Line was made in 2009, based on a wide range of factors, of which cost was one. The decision to build light rail has been widely supported, especially by both Counties.

100. *Please provide a current copy of the Wastewater Treatment Plan, for at least the Sligo Creek watershed. This has been requested multiple times, most recently as a PIA, sharing that information without a formal and related request would be a good show of faith.*

**Response:** The project does not have a Wastewater Treatment Plan. Documents requested through the Public Information Act will be supplied as required by law.

## **QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL**

101. Will the Council require that the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) be reopened during periods when there is no construction activity on the Trail thus truly "Minimizing Trail Closure" as cited in the Record of Decision (ROD)? Will the other requirements in the ROD - such as the environmental and transportation plans that are to be in place BEFORE construction - be respected?
102. Will the Council tell MTA and the PLTP to HOLD OFF cutting trees on the Trail, since there is no urgency to cut all trees now, since the claims regarding the Purple Line have not all been adjudicated in court, and since we can "cut the wires, not the trees" given existing modern light rail -wireless technology options? Wireless technology options for light rail do not use overhead catenary wires but instead use underground wires or batteries, or other wireless light rail technology, as detailed in this 2011 article:
- <http://www.masstransitmag.com/article/10262406/the-future-is-here-catenary-less-power-for-light-rail>. These 'wireless' options make it possible to save many of the large, mature trees along the trail and in residents' backyards that would otherwise be slated for clear-cutting, since branches and trees must be cleared in order not to interfere with the catenary wires.*
103. Will the Council require the PLTP and the State MTA to provide a remediation plan for the Trail and the trees if the Court requires an SEIS?
104. Will the Council require 30 days' notice with local jurisdictions and impacted residents regarding construction activity?
105. Will the Council require the State MTA and the PLTP to establish procedures for active and two-way communication with local jurisdiction and with the representatives of affected community residents?

**Response to the above:** The Purple Line is a State project; the Council cannot make requirements of the State. The Councilmembers have exhorted MTA and PLTP to be transparent in sharing information with—and mitigating impacts on—residents adjacent to the right-of-way throughout the construction period. The Council has also urged MTA and PLTP to complete the project expeditiously, so that the benefits of the Purple Line, the Capital Crescent Trail, the Silver Spring Green Trail, and the Bethesda Metro Southern Entrance can be realized as soon as possible.

106. Who will be the County Council liaison for further questions and issues?

**Response:** The Council staff person on transportation issues is Deputy Council Administrator Glenn Orlin ([glenn.orlin@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:glenn.orlin@montgomerycountymd.gov)). However, for answers to specific questions about the design and construction of the Purple Line and associated projects, the best County contact is Tim Cupples, County DOT's Purple Line Coordinator ([tim.cupples@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:tim.cupples@montgomerycountymd.gov)).

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE PLANNING BOARD**

The Planning Board sent questions directly to MTA in a separate letter and we will be responding directly to them by the end of October, with a copy to the County Council.