

**Testimony of William Samuel Before the Montgomery County Council  
Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, 2025 Update**

I am Bill Samuel, testifying as a concerned individual. I support the Planning Board's recommendation to remove the northern section of Midcounty Highway Extended (M-83) from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways. I was confirmed to speak in person at the hearing, but my name was removed at the last minute with no notice to me, apparently because another witness lives in the same building as I do.

I live at Dayspring in Germantown. I serve on the mission group of the Dayspring Silent Retreat Center. The Retreat Center would be negatively impacted if the northern section of M-83 is built, as would the entire Dayspring property.

I agree with the Planning Board's Climate Assessment on the removal of this section of M-83. Destroying parts of the forest cover and impacting the streams along the route would degrade the affected area environmentally. It would also diminish the quality of life of those living near the highway, who would suffer not only from the loss of tree cover and negative stream impact but also from noise pollution. Transit options are a much better way to handle the real transportation needs of those living in Upcounty.

I never used my vehicle to regularly commute all the way to work during my entire working career. I know firsthand the benefits of using public transit, bus and train, and not spending long hours commuting on congested highways in my own vehicle. I believe many Upcounty residents would find Bus Rapid Transit and its connections to Metrorail a pleasant alternative to driving on congested highways.. I also know many workers do not have and cannot afford their own personal vehicle or two different vehicles for working members of their family, and therefore rely on adequate public transit.

We need to change the priorities of the Bus Rapid Transit plans. The County has prioritized improving transit options in corridors with considerable transit options ahead of the needs of Upcounty where currently the options are very limited. This is wrong. The BRT to Clarksburg has not been scheduled for construction. The County needs to change its priorities to speed up building the Upcounty portion of the BRT.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.