



Transit Alternatives to Mid-County Highway Extended

Transit Networks Serving the Upcounty Must Be Maintained and Expanded

Testimony to the Montgomery County Council
September 30, 2025

Good afternoon, I'm testifying today for Transit Alternatives to Midcounty Highway Extended (TAME) Coalition, in favor of the Special Appropriation for a comprehensive study of travel needs and master-planned transportation capacity, along the Clarksburg to Montgomery Village corridor. We are for improved transportation choices for all Upcounty residents; when more people choose to switch from driving to transit, that "mode-switch" improves traffic flow for drivers.

To prepare for this public hearing, I have reviewed TAME Coalition's many testimonies given to the County Council over the last 15 years, requesting transit alternatives be funded and implemented for the upcounty.

We ask that this study focus upon these five (5) relevant transit alternatives for Upcounty residents:

1) Maintain and Expand the Three Existing Transit Networks: Ride On Bus, MARC trains, and the Metro Red Line at Shady Grove, already provide mobility choices to Upcounty residents. We ask you to continue to fund their maintenance, and their wise expansion. Corridor Connector bus routes in the "Great Seneca" network, and Bus Rapid Transit on Route 355, are new systems being designed for the Upcounty.

2) Increase Bus Frequency on Planned BRT Routes; Fund 2 Mid-Day MARC Trains. TAME Coalition supports the request of Action Committee for Transit for: (1) immediate increases in bus frequency on planned BRT routes; and (2) funding the two mid-day MARC trains that CSX has agreed to but the state has not funded. Regarding immediate increases in bus frequency along planned BRT routes – we recommend that the existing Ride On Express Route 101 be extended from Gaithersburg all the way up to Clarksburg, staying straight on Route 355. This would be like the popular Ride On Route 40 from Wheaton to Rockville, running every 15 minutes staying on Viers Mill Road, to be replicated on Route 355: people need reliable, frequent buses combined with straight, fast routes that don't meander.

3) Study how to accelerate full funding of MARC station parking upgrades to support increased ridership at Germantown and Boyds; these are master-planned improvements waiting to be funded and built.

4) Combine transit choices with pedestrian and cyclist safety measures to provide mobility for young people, elders, and people with disabilities, many of whom lack a safe route from home to the bus stop.

5) The study must note these three (3) recent decisions and positive trends affecting Upcounty transportation: (1) The removal of M83 highway northern section from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, by Council vote on July 29, 2025, supported by the



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County Executive and the Planning Board; (2) The decision to make Ride On buses fare-free for all riders, combined with a 20% ridership surge in 2024; and (3) The creation by DC, Maryland and Virginia in 2018, of a permanent dedicated capital fund for the WMATA system, which reported 10% ridership growth earlier this year.

Respectfully,

Margaret Schoap
TAME Coalition, Organizer

Resident
Germantown, Md