Purpose of this Meeting

- Introduce the study and the team members
- Present the environmental review and planning process
- Present the draft project purpose and needs
- Review the project schedule
- Solicit feedback on the study
The NEPA Study started December 2009

The NEPA Study is a federal requirement before Federal funding can be used

Future phases would be dependent upon the results of the NEPA study and available Federal funding

Study funded by the Montgomery County Government

Potential Funding Sources for Construction:

- Defense Access Road (DAR) funding
- Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant
- 2010 Defense Appropriations Bill
Introduction

Partner agencies

- Federal Highway Administration (Lead Federal Agency)
- National Naval Medical Center (NNMC)
- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration
- MNCPPC
- WMATA
- Others

Study Area

MD 355 (Wisconsin Ave) between Jones Bridge Road and Cedar Lane
The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) provides a public decision-making process that outlines procedures in considering the potential environmental impacts of a full array of study alternatives.

Three stages of a NEPA study:

- Project scoping
- Alternatives development and evaluation
- Decision-making and final documentation

Stage I - Project Scoping

- Development of a draft Purpose and Need Statement
- Understanding the study area by collecting environmental and engineering inventory data
- Introducing the project to interested stakeholders
- Creating a dialogue for potential solutions
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Study Process

Stage II - Developing and Evaluating Study Alternatives
- Analyzing a full array of possible solutions
- Screening of alternatives resulting in a smaller set for detailed analysis
- Detailed engineering and environmental analysis of remaining study alternatives
- Presenting results of study to interested stakeholders
- Refining alternatives based on public input

Stage III - Decision-Making and Documentation
- Refine alternatives based on public input
- Identify a preferred alternative
- Document the study, public input and reasoning behind selection of an alternative
- Receive approval from lead federal agency on environmental documentation
Public Involvement Plan

▷ Public outreach and interaction will occur throughout the study process
▷ Major features of the plan include:
  - Regular updates at BRAC Implementation Committee (BIC) meetings
  - Public Alternates Workshop
  - Updates on the County’s BRAC web page
  - Community meetings
  - Elected official and other briefings

Draft Purpose and Need Statement

Purpose of Project
- Improve the mobility and safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists crossing MD 355 / Rockville Pike in Bethesda
- Enhance / improve access to mass transit facilities
Study Schedule and Milestones

- Begin NEPA study – December 2009
- Develop Purpose and Need Statement summary – January 2010
- Scope preliminary alternatives – January / February 2010
- Evaluate shortlist of alternatives – March / April 2010
- Conduct public workshop to review detailed study – April / May / 2010
- Identify selected alternative – May 2010
- Complete environmental documentation – June 2010

Scoping of Potential Solutions

- Study Team will review a full array of potential options
  - Previously studied concepts
  - New concepts generated by the Study Team
  - New concepts from public and stakeholder agency input

We Want Your Input!