

Introductions, Project Update, Overview of Agenda

Alanna McKeeman began the meeting and the project staff and CAC members all introduced themselves. Alanna reviewed the ground rules for the CAC meetings. She explained that this meeting would consist of a presentation given by Darcy Buckley, MCDOT, reviewing the results of the alternatives analysis performed in this phase of the study. This presentation would take about 40 minutes, so Alanna asked CAC members to save questions until the end of the presentation.

Presentation

Darcy Buckley from MCDOT and Denny Finnerin from Gannett Fleming gave a presentation that included a brief overview of the project, as well as the project timeline and purpose. Darcy then summarized the different segments of the corridor and each alternative to help CAC members re-familiarize themselves with since the last meeting. Darcy described the two-level station screening performed by the project team and presented the station location recommendations. Darcy and Denny then discussed the results of the modeling process and explained how each alternative measured in terms of the project objectives, such as increasing ridership, making trips faster and more competitive, improving transit quality, minimizing environmental impacts, and more. The presentation ended with a summary of the findings and CAC members were invited to ask questions or provide comments on the contents of the presentation. [The presentation is available [at this link](#)]

Questions, Comments, and Discussion

Questions

QUESTION (Q): How did you get the ridership data for the model?

RESPONSE (R): The project team used the regional travel demand forecasting model. The model uses surveys and data from transit agencies in the region to provide a prediction for the future ridership of different services.

Q: How does the model take into account an alternative that involves changing between curb, median, and mixed traffic, a so-called "hybrid alternative."?

R: The model did not include a hybrid alternative. It is important to note that because our modeling found that when the bus leaves the guideway frequently, it causes delays in travel time, so BRT service will not likely switch frequently between different methods of travel.

COMMENT (C): The COG model is a little outdated and there are certain assumptions that may not necessarily be true, especially with development.

R: Land use data for the model is updated about every two years so this aspect should be current.

Q: Will Segment 1 only be mixed traffic?

R: In Alternatives A, B, and B modified, the BRT would travel in mixed traffic throughout Segment One. However, in Alternative C the BRT would operate in a peak-direction managed curb lane. The two center general traffic lanes would have a reversible operation with different AM/PM lane configurations. BRT vehicles in the off-peak direction would travel in mixed traffic.

Q: Will the roadway be widened in Segment One?

R: No, there is no roadway widening in Segment One in any of the alternatives. Additional right-of-way will be necessary where new stations are located. However, in Alternative C the median would be removed to create an additional lane and allow for the two center general traffic lanes to have a reversible operation with different AM/PM lane configurations.

Q: Do all alternatives require construction?

R: All of the BRT Alternatives require some construction, but this is not necessarily to the roadway, it could just mean construction of stations.

Q: How does the no-build alternative change mode-share from what it is today?

R: There are other planned transportation projects that the model takes into account.

Q: Was a cost-benefit analysis performed?

R: There is a cost per rider for each of the alternatives, which will likely be the best possible indicator of cost-effectiveness currently as it considers ridership, as well as operating and capital cost. It's possible that we would do a formal cost-benefit analysis during a future phase.

Q: Will there be more detailed aerial maps of each proposed alternative that CAC members can review?

R: Yes, they will be included in the Corridor Study Report that will be finished before the Open Houses at the end of June. There is also an interactive on-line mapping tool that can be used to view the alternatives.

Q: Is MCDOT confident that BRT can attract new riders in segment seven based on aggregate data rather than segment-specific data?

R: In the analysis, the project team used ridership data that is broken down by segment to analyze each alternative.

Q: Why does the model use ridership projections for 2040 rather than present day?

R: Infrastructure improvements are typically designed for the full life of the investment. The idea is to design the system with future use and ridership in mind, so it can be scaled.

Q: How was the data regarding air quality developed?

R: There is an FTA spreadsheet that helps quantify the effects. The numbers are based on the length of the alignment and the amount of ridership for each alternative.

Q: How will station be at Medical Center in light of the current construction project happening there?

R: The southbound station would be located in the existing bus pullout lane. However, to accommodate the BRT station, the pullout will be eliminated and the BRT will stop in the curb lane. In the northbound direction, the station is located on the immediate near side of the intersection of South Drive/Wood Road.

Q: Why is car faster than bus in median situation?

R: This is likely because the BRT needs to stop at stations, while a car does not. The difference between the car and the BRT are more comparable in the peak direction. When there is a traffic incident that backs up general purpose lanes during rush hour the BRT will likely be faster.

Q: How do you choose where the BRT service travels? It could work well as a feeder to the Metro, but how do we attract new riders?

R: There are areas that are not well served today that show high ridership demand in the model, such as northern Shady Grove. As the project progresses, MCDOT will further examine the local bus network and make recommendations as to how best adjust it.

Q: Does the model take both physical redevelopment and new developments in transit, such as micro transit, into account?

R: Yes, both are considered, however, micro transit is not included since the service did not exist when the model was developed. The model can be helpful in terms of scale, but it is only a prediction tool. Ridership data is one piece of a larger picture.

Conclusion

Alanna thanked the CAC members for attending the meeting and providing constructive feedback. She invited them to attend the upcoming Open Houses that would take place at the end of June and said she asked for their help publicizing them.