

ATTENDEES: **CORRIDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)**  
**MEETING #5 SUMMARY**

**APRIL 3, 2025**

**7:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

<b>CAC Members</b>
Silvanna Valencia
Mollie Habermeier

<b>Members of the Public</b>	
Barbara Gold	Mark Thorne
Bee Ditzler	Michel Cukier
Donald Allen	Gary Franklin
Hali Duong	Nancy Abeles
Hollie Hornstein	Peggy Schwartz
Jeff Kallmeyer	Shuxi Liu
Jerry Garson	Terrance Harris
Kristal Southern	Travis Montgomery
Lawrence Soler	William Xie

<b>Montgomery County Staff and Consultant Team</b>	
Jamie Henson	MCDOT
Joe Moges	MCDOT
Justin Willits	MCDOT
Jiaxin Tong	MCDOT
Kate Widness	Kimley-Horn
Paul Elman	Kimley-Horn

## PRESENTATION OVERVIEW:

- **Welcome and Introductions**
  - Project manager Jiaxin Tong welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief overview of meeting expectations, zoom software, and the meeting agenda.
- **Study Overview and Status**
  - An overview of the planning study termini and outcomes was presented to provide additional background information. An update on the project schedule and an overview of recently received feedback on the North Bethesda BRT project was provided.
- **Revisited Build Alternatives**
  - An overview of the build alternatives being evaluated as part of the alternatives analysis, including lane configuration, proposed station locations, typical cross-sections for the build alternatives and plan view layouts was a major focus of the presentation. The alternatives presented included:
    - **Build Alternative 1 – Center-Running BRT:** Alignment most closely aligned with 2013 Transit Corridors Master Plan and additional multimodal and land use plan vision. It includes 8 proposed stations, serves the north entrance of North Bethesda Metrorail Station, and has 2.45 miles of dedicated lanes of BRT.
    - **Build Alternative 2 – Curb-Running BRT:** Strategic alignment for the sector plan growth area. It includes 7 proposed stations and serves the current entrance at North Bethesda Metrorail Station. Extending service to Westlake Drive and includes 2.17 miles of dedicated lanes of BRT.
- **Analysis of Alternatives**
  - An explanation of the corridor and its future growth opportunities that support the need for dedicated BRT infrastructure was provided as context for the overall project. Additionally, the results of how the build alternatives satisfied the various metrics including populations/jobs served, ridership, travel time savings for transit, traffic impacts, right-of-way needs, and infrastructure investments were shared.
- **Summary of Comparison**
  - The two build alternatives were compared against one another for the following categories: transit operations, capital cost, Right-of-Way (ROW) need, intersection level of service, and station takeaways. The results of this comparison were shown in tabular format for the CAC to review.
- **Outreach and Next Steps**
  - An updated public engagement plan, timeframe, and purpose of engagement activity. Additionally, an overview of the remaining steps to finalize the study.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (BOTH “CHAT” AND VERBAL):

- Comment: With the new bicycle lanes on Old Georgetown Road, inserting a center lane does not leave two lanes on either side anymore.
- Question: Where are the Old Georgetown Road bike lanes on build alternative 2?
  - The bike lanes are replaced with a sidepath on the east side and a buffered sidewalk on the westside of Old Georgetown Road in Alternative 2.
- Question: What is the view with the proposed stops near Tuckerman Lane? These all-impact homes.
  - Response: Community concerns regarding potential impact to properties with locating a BRT station at this intersection were acknowledged. MCDOT will address this feedback in the final recommendation on stop locations. Further refinement will be conducted during the design phase to address community concerns.
- Question: So there no longer will be a bike lane on Old Georgetown Road? Because at many places, Old Georgetown Road is just two travel lanes plus the bike lane.
  - Response: As part of the build alternatives, the space for the bike lanes would be repurposed into transit lanes. The primary bike facility would be shifted to a 11' sidepath on the east side of Old Georgetown Road. The sidewalk on the west side will have a buffer from the travel lanes.
- Question: Where do you expect the bike riders to ride?
  - Response: The primary bike facility along Old Georgetown Road would be the proposed 11' sidepath on the east side of the street. Depending on rider comfort level and ability, they may use general travel lanes in a manner consistent with Maryland Law.
- Comment: Old Georgetown Road can take you 20 minutes to travel along since the bike lanes were implemented. Tilden Lane has more traffic, and I would like you to reconsider putting the BRT on Tuckerman Lane.
- Question: So there's a bike path only on one side of Old Georgetown Road?
  - Response: Yes, a sidepath will be on the east side of Old Georgetown Road and a buffered sidewalk will be present on the west side.
- Comment: Consider taking away the bike lanes and rework the sidewalk to something more useful and safer and have minimal impact to the roadway.
- Question: What is the purpose of BRT? Is it just to get people from the metro to the mall?
  - Response: The North Bethesda BRT project is to provide an upgraded transit service that delivers faster, more reliable service and this project connects people from the Westfield Montgomery Mall to the North Bethesda Metrorail Station as well as to jobs, education, and other services.

- Question: Will the 11' or 17' sidepath be separated among pedestrians and bike riders or will it be combined?
  - Response: It will not be separated by uses.
- Comment: There is a lot going on along Old Georgetown Road, including converting commercial to multi family; It is difficult to go through Old Georgetown Road and too narrow for what it could complete all in favor of a few minutes people's time.
- Comment: The bike lanes have been an enormous success at keeping our kids from getting killed.
- Question: Is the BRT service intended to replace the current bus service on these roads, or will it be duplicative?
  - Response: Local routes would still exist making local stops but the frequency of these may be adjusted.
- Question: are you coordinating with SHA on this project?
  - Response: Yes, SHA is a stakeholder for this project.
- Comment: We're losing jobs and population potentially because of impacts to MoCo by the new Federal administration. The county is struggling to attract or come up with new businesses instead of biotech, which has lost funding potential now.
- Question: How are the ridership estimates being produced?
  - Response: The ridership estimates were developed using Federal Transit Administration's ridership forecasting tool, called Simplified-Trips-on-Project software (STOPS). MCDOT maintains a county-wide STOPS model to project BRT ridership.
- Comment: Travel time could also be reduced if you just increased the current service from 30 minutes to 15 minutes during peak hours.
- Comment: many people who don't and can't take BRT will be significantly inconvenienced by this project.
- Comment: Your presentation implies that only one build (or no build) option will be selected for the entire route; why not switch up the infrastructure based on the impact on homes. There is no amount of potential future jobs that will make me support something that takes land from the front of my house.
- Comment: People drive on Old Georgetown Road at excessive speeds. Removing the bike lanes will get people back into their bad habits.
- Question: When was the decision made that Tuckerman Lane is no longer an option?
  - Response: A termini screening was completed in 2022 which decided that the eastern terminus would be the North Bethesda Metro Station, and this eliminated the potential use of Tuckerman Lane.
- Question: Will our comments from today be taken into consideration for the public meeting?

- Response: Yes, all comment received during this planning process will be considered as we move towards a preferred alternative.
- Question: How do you intend to publicize the public meeting?
  - Response: We will have information on the project website, social media, conduct canvassing/pop-up events along the corridor, and provide the details to the contacts we have for this project.
- Question: For people riding bikes on Old Georgetown Road on the breezeway, how do you move south from Pike and Rose; could you ride on the bus lane?
  - Response: Yes, you can ride in the bus lane. We would sign as bus/bike lane.
- Question: Where would school buses travel along these corridors?
  - Response: More coordination would be needed to determine where school buses would travel and would be dependent on facility type that is implemented.
- Question: Will service vehicles, such as fire trucks, fit within the space provided?
  - Yes, fire trucks will fit within the proposed bus lanes.
- Comment: I looked at Termini screening, and if you want to service people going to North Bethesda, you could go down Tuckerman Lane to Rockville Pike.
  - Response: This would be a longer-distance travel time, and we would miss capturing riders at Pike and Rose.
- Comment: If someone is at Pike and Rose, they can walk to the Metro. A bus stop is not necessary here. While I appreciate your presentations, all of them have been very biased towards one of the build options. So, while the County may make the decision, the way the information has been presented comes off very biased.
- Question: What information do you need for a no-build recommendation?
  - Response: We don't make that decision as part of this study. Planning staff will review our findings, and they will come up with suggestions to the Planning Board. The Planning Board will then make a suggestion to the County Council. The County Council will make the ultimate decision.
- Comment: By the time this would be built, the costs will have risen significantly.
- Question: Where might the proposed Woodward station be moved? Would it be moved south, and that's why you removed the Tuckerman station?
  - Response: We would make the station location as safe as possible. Potential location could be near Edson Lane or in front of Woodward depending on the alternatives.
- Question: Has this project been factored into DMV Moves?
  - Response: Yes, we have been working actively with them.
- Question: How many riders do you expect to use this FLASH bus per day?
  - Response: 1,500-1,800 riders per day

- Comment: Adaptive, flexible solutions were used on 355 BRT; treatments specific to each segment. Some parts in mixed traffic too, according to row limitations. This needs to be considered on this project.
- Question: Will there be rezoning along the route?
  - Response: Zoning is not part of MCDOT purview. We defer to Montgomery Planning on these types of questions.