North Bethesda
Bus Rapid Transit Planning Study
Online Open House
Meeting Agenda

• Project Overview
  • What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
  • Purpose & Background
  • Study Schedule
  • Goals and Objectives
  • Corridor Foundations
• Termini Screening
• Questions & Comments
Project Overview

A Snapshot of Project Progress
What is Bus Rapid Transit?

- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a faster and more reliable bus system.
- BRT routes in Montgomery County are branded under the network name, Flash.
- Benefits include →

FLASH IS GREAT BECAUSE:

- Faster Travel - Frequent Service, Fewer Stops
- Stations include weather protection, real-time transit information, seating and lighting
- Buses communicate with traffic signals to keep moving
- Dedicated bus lanes where feasible, reducing delays
- Quick boarding at all doors. Easy entry for wheelchairs, strollers and bicycles
- Safe access to stations
- Riding Flash keeps you active and healthier
- Riding Flash instead of driving a car can save you money
- Better for the environment
Flash BRT Active Network

- Ten BRT routes were proposed in the 2013 master plan
- Of the 10 routes:
  - 1 in service
  - 2 in the planning stage
  - 2 in the design stage

Status: In Design
Additional improvements are being studied.
North Bethesda Transitway Planning Study

• Corridor Extents from 2013 Master Plan:
  o Western Terminus: Westfield Montgomery Mall
  o Eastern Terminus: White Flint or Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail station

• Study Outcomes:
  o What type of BRT service is needed in this area
  o Select an eastern terminus
  o Designate alignment types
    o Dedicated BRT lanes vs. mixed traffic
  o Confirm stop locations

The North Bethesda Flash will connect to the MD355 and Randolph Road BRT services and will integrate with future BRT routes.
Bus Rapid Transit Project

2013
MASTER
PLAN

2022
PLANNING
STUDY

WE ARE HERE

ENVIRONMENTAL
EVALUATION

PRELIMINARY
DESIGN

FINAL
DESIGN

CONSTRUCTION
Study Schedule

- **We Are Here**
  - Summer 2022
  - Termini Screening

- **Build Alternatives Development**
  - Fall 2022

- **Build Alternatives Analysis**
  - Winter 2023

- **Select Preferred Alternative**
  - Spring 2023

**Stakeholder & Public Meetings**
- Winter 2022
- Spring 2022
- Summer 2022

**Stakeholder Meetings**
- Winter 2022
- Spring 2022
- Summer 2022

**Project Survey**
- Winter 2022
- Spring 2022
- Summer 2022
Goals and Objectives

- **Quality Service**: Provide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service.
- **Mobility Choices**: Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities.
- **Sustainable Solutions**: Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design.
- **Community Equity**: Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations.
- **Economic Growth**: Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit.
- **Public Safety**: Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities.

Potential to be used as countywide goals and objectives for Flash BRT system.
Corridor Foundations

Developing Baseline Data and Understanding Existing Conditions
Establishing Corridor Foundations

- Related Studies & Projects
- Demographics
- Activity Density
- Multimodal Travel Conditions
- Land Use & Development
- Street Network
- Multimodal Connectivity
- Transportation Safety
- Transit Service
Key Opportunities

• Opportunity to connect diverse communities with jobs and retail in the study area

• Opportunity to increase transit mode share with high-quality transit

• New development provides opportunity for new ridership

• Sector plans assume robust transportation system to support new development
Key Opportunities

- Opportunity to connect to planned regional transit
- Opportunity to improve multimodal connectivity
- Opportunity to achieve Vision Zero goals
- Post-COVID travel patterns will need to be continually monitored, and may justify more all-day bus service
Termini Screening

Assessment and Comparison of the Eastern Terminus Alternatives
White Flint Alternative

NOTE: Alignment, station locations, dedicated lane assumptions, and pedestrian/bike facilities based on the County’s Transitways Corridor Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and Bicycle Master Plan. All are subject to further analysis during the Build Alternatives Phase.
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Metrics

Quality Service
Proxide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service
- Existing Bus Stops’ Boardings and Alightings along the Corridor
- Access for Existing Residents along the Corridor
- Existing Metrorail Ridership at Termi
- Potential to Improve Transit Reliability
- Increase Of Service Frequency and Span
- Minimizing Impacts to Traffic Flow
- Connections to Planned BRT Network
- Regional Connectivity

Community Equity
Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations
- Access for Low-Income Households
- Access for Zero-Car Households
- Access for Low-English Proficiency Populations
- Access for Seniors
- Access for Persons with Disabilities
- Access for Minority Populations
- Access for Lower Paying Jobs
- Number of Equity Focus Areas within 3/4 mile of alignment

Mobility Choices
Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities
- Access to Community Facilities
- Access to Existing Jobs
- Connections to Existing and Planned Bike Network

Economic Growth
Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit
- Connections to Planned Development
- Projected Future Activity (Jobs and People) Along Corridor
- Support for Transit Oriented Development

Sustainable Solutions
Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design
- Potential Right of Way Expansion Needed
- Level of Infrastructure Investment
- Operational Cost
- Potential to Support Electric Fleet

Public Safety
Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities
- Potential to Improve Vulnerable Road Users (VRU) Safety
- Potential to Improve Vehicular Safety
- Connection to Green Space
## Termini Screening Results

<table>
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### Which Alternative Best Achieves the Goal?

- No Notable Advantage
- Some Advantage
- Significant Advantage
Questions and Comments
Available Information

Scan This To Access the **Project Webpage**

Scan This To View the **Project StoryMap**
Thank You

Sandra Marks – BRT Project Manager, MCDOT

Sandra.marks@montgomerycountymd.gov
**TERMINI SCREENING REPORT CARD**

**Study Background**
- The North Bethesda Transitway was proposed in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan to connect the Westfield Montgomery Mall and Metrorail Red Line.
- It is one of 10 proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) routes in the County’s Flash BRT system.
- Two alternatives were identified for the BRT’s eastern terminus (end point):
  - White Flint Metrorail Station
  - Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station
- The purpose of this study is to determine if and what type of BRT service is needed in this area to connect between key activity centers.

The North Bethesda Transitway study is currently in the Termini Screening phase, during which an eastern terminus will be selected. Next, more details of the route and service will be developed and analyzed.

**Termini Screening Process**
Following the Corridor Foundations Report, which details the current conditions of the project area, the Termini Screening assessed two eastern terminus alternatives for the North Bethesda Transitway. Each alternative was screened using various metrics to determine which alternative better aligns with the North Bethesda BRT goals and objectives.

**Alternative Results Summary**

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**Which Alternative Best Achieves the Goal?**
- No Notable Advantage
- Some Advantage
- Significant Advantage

The following pages of this report card detail the full results of the termini screening.
White Flint Alternative

Key Takeaways:

- Serves **more existing bus ridership** (approximately 450 more, or 40% more riders per weekday).
- Serves almost **double the number of jobs** (approximately 41,000 compared with 24,000) and community facilities (28 versus 16) including recreation centers, schools, and medical facilities.
- Will strengthen and **promote 9.3 million square feet of planned development** (approximately double the planned development).
- **Better supports forecasted change in people and jobs.** The White Flint corridor has a 31% forecast growth from 2020 to 2030, whereas Grosvenor’s projected change is 2%.
- **Better opportunity to increase countywide and regional connectivity** and attracting approximately 44% more regional trips.
- Provides improved service to a **higher number of low-income and minority populations, low-paying jobs, and equity emphasis areas**.

NOTE: Alignment, station locations, dedicated lane assumptions, and pedestrian/bike facilities based on the County’s Transitways Corridor Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and Bicycle Master Plan. All are subject to further analysis during the Build Alternatives Phase.
Grosvenor Alternative

**Key Takeaways:**

- Serves more **pre-pandemic Metrorail riders** likely due to the presence of parking facilities.
- Lower level of infrastructure investment and potential right-of-way needed which would indicate a lower cost and potentially shorter construction timeline based on assumed stations and lane configuration.
- Serves more existing land use that is **supportive of transit**.

**Map Notes:**

- **Legend**:
  - Metrobus Red Line
  - Metrobus Yellow Line
  - White Flint Alignment
  - Grosvenor Alignment
  - Mixed Traffic
  - Dedicated Lanes
  - Sidewalk
  - Separated Bike Lane
  - Potential Stations

**Map Details:**

- **Master Plan assumed sidepath along Tuckerman**
- **Surrounded by multi-story residential complexes and hotels and medium density residential**
- **Assumed primarily dedicated lanes**

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