PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS

PROJECT PLANNING STUDY

PRESENTATION & PUBLIC TESTIMONY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

LOCATION/DESIGN

EVENING PUBLIC HEARING

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Montgomery Blair High School
51 University Boulevard East
Silver Spring, MD 20901

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MR. REBISH:

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I am Augustine Rebish, Deputy District Engineer for the Maryland State Highway Administration's District 3, which includes Montgomery County.

I will be the hearing officer this evening. Tonight's hearing is being held jointly by the State Highway Administration, the Federal Highway Administration and Montgomery County. On behalf of these agencies, I welcome you to this location/design public hearing for the MD 97/Montgomery Hills project planning study.

The purpose of this hearing is to equate you with the project to provide an opportunity to present your views regarding the proposed location and design of the alternatives under consideration.

Please direct your attention to the project brochure. If you have not received it, copies are available from the receptionist.

The brochure summarizes information related to this project and provides descriptions of the proposed improvements and an environmental

summary. Please review the brochure to aid your understanding of tonight's presentation.

I will now introduce representatives of State Highway Administration who will participate in this evening's hearing.

Mr. Jeremy Beck, the Project Manager;

Ms. Christina Brandt, the Environmental Manager;

Mr. Robert Hammond-Bey, the District 3 Real Property Manager;

Ms. Shabnam Izadi, the Equal Opportunity Officer

To contact members of the project team, please refer to the brochure. The project team is also available tonight to answer your questions or provide information to individuals or groups.

At this time, I would like to invite any elected officials to stand for recognition.

(Pause)

Okay. None standing. Thank you. To notify the individuals of tonight's hearing and encourage their participation, the State Highway

Administration published a formal notice in the newspapers listed in the brochure, mailed postcards announcing the meeting, distributed brochures to the persons on the project mailing list, provided public service announcements to radio stations serving this area and on social media and placed information on the State Highway Administration's website.

Interested groups and individuals who are not already on the mailing list are encouraged to submit their names to our receptionist. This list will be used to notify you of any subsequent public involvement and for the distribution of project information.

This evening's proceedings are being recorded. The official transcript of this public hearing will become part of the project record. Written comments including emails and materials for inclusion in the transcript will be accepted until December 31st, 2015.

Comments may still be submitted after this date for consideration in the decision making process for this project. Approximately 8

weeks after the hearing, the transcript will be available to review and a copy -- the location is listed in the brochure. The transcript will also be placed on the State Highway Administration's website.

To confirm the availability of the transcript, please contact Mr. Jeremy Beck as noted in the brochure.

The State Highway Administration's project development process consists of four distinct phases: Project planning, Engineering or Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition and Construction.

The project is currently in the detailed study stage of project planning. During project planning, the location, general design features and environmental impacts are identified.

Current activities include engineering, environmental studies in coordination with local, state and federal agencies and public involvement. The results of our studies will be summarized for you this evening.

Following the project planning is

1 engineering or final design, during which
2 construction drawings are prepared and final
3 right-of-way requirements are determined.
4 Right-of-way acquisition usually begins
5 about halfway through the design phase and right-
6 of-way impacts for this project are limited to
7 the properties adjacent to the corridor.
8 Representatives of State Highway
9 Administration's Office of Real Estate are
10 available tonight to answer questions.
11 Construction can only begin after final
12 design is completed and right-of-way has been
13 acquired.
14 The project is currently funded for
15 project planning only. If the study concludes
16 with the selection of a build alternate, the
17 project will become a candidate for inclusion in
18 future programs for final design, right-of-way
19 acquisition and construction.
20 The project is listed in the primary
21 development and evaluation section of the fiscal
22 years 2015 through 2020 Consolidated
23 Transportation Program. It is also included in

1 the State Highway Administration's Long Range
2 Plan, which is called the Highway Needs
3 Inventory.
4 This project is consistent with the
5 Maryland National Capital Park and Planning
6 Commission's North and West Silver Spring Master
7 Plan, adopted in 2000.
8 MD 97 or Georgia Avenue, is on the State
9 of Maryland's secondary system and is
10 functionally classified as an urban other
11 principal arterial roadway. Georgia Avenue
12 serves commuters, heavy trucks and local traffic.
13 The majority of the drivers on the
14 corridor are traveling to and from downtown
15 Silver Spring and Washington, DC, both of which
16 are located south of the project limits.
17 Mr. Jeremy Beck will describe the MD 97
18 Montgomery Hills project planning study and the
19 alternatives and options that are being
20 considered. Jeremy?
21 MR. BECK:
22 Thank you, Augie. The limits of the MD
23 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study extend

1 from MD 192, Forest Glen Road, to MD 390, 16th
2 Street, a distance of approximately seven tenths
3 of a mile.
4 The purpose of the project is to
5 establish a balanced approach to transportation
6 within the Georgia Avenue corridor by evaluating
7 existing vehicular, pedestrian and bicyclist
8 mobility and safety while accommodating proposed
9 transmit enhancements and establishing a sense of
10 place within the Montgomery Hills community.
11 The mix of local and regional commuter
12 traffic in conjunction with the study area of
13 roadway and sidewalk conditions creates an
14 automobile dominated environment not always
15 supportive of other modes of transportation.
16 As a result, pedestrian accessability,
17 bicycle connectivity, access to local businesses
18 and transit use have become major challenges
19 within the project area.
20 Between Forest Glen Road and the I-495
21 Capital Beltway Interchange, excuse me, Georgia
22 Avenue consists of four travel lanes in each
23 direction, separated by a median. Between the I-

1 495 Capital Beltway Interchange and 16th Street,
2 the Georgia Avenue corridor has three travel
3 lanes in each direction. A reversible center
4 lane provides a fourth lane southbound in the
5 morning and northbound in the evening to
6 accommodate commuters during peak periods.
7 During non peak travel periods, this
8 reversible lane operates as a two-way center left
9 turn lane. Left turns from Georgia Avenue onto
10 side streets are restricted during peak travel
11 periods. The posted speed limit on Georgia
12 Avenue is 35 miles per hour.
13 Signalized intersections along Georgia
14 Avenue within the project area include Forest
15 Glen Road, the I-495 interchange ramps, Seminary
16 Place, Seminary Road/Columbia Boulevard and
17 northbound 16th street.
18 Sidewalks exist along both sides of
19 Georgia Avenue but do not meet the current
20 Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
21 A grade separated pedestrian bicyclist
22 path crosses the Capital Beltway along the west
23 side of Georgia Avenue. There are no on-road

bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue.

Crosswalks are provided at the five signalized intersections. Bus stops are located near Forest Glen Road and Seminary Place. The Forest Glen Metro Rail Station is located near the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Forest Glen Road.

The project team has identified transportation alternatives that address the project need while minimizing impacts to the social, cultural and natural environment.

Based upon impact from project stakeholders, four alternatives including the no-build and two options have been retained for detailed study. Alternatives and options not retained for detailed study are identified in the brochure.

Alternative 1 is the no-build alternative. It includes no major capital improvements. Minor, short term improvements could occur as part of routine maintenance and safety operations. This alternative does not address the purpose and need for the project. It

serves as a baseline of comparison for the impacts and benefits of the build alternatives and options.

Alternative 2 is the transportation systems management/transportation demand management alternative. It would maintain the existing center reversible lane and include a 16-foot wide outer travel lane in each direction to accommodate on-road bicyclists.

A five foot wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue and would be set back from the curb by five feet where space allows.

Alternative 2 also includes improvements at existing signalized intersections such as transit signal priority, queue jumps and access consolidation.

Transit signal priority allows approaching buses to send a signal to a transmitter at a signalized intersection to modify the signal timing and allow the buses to proceed through the signal without stopping.

Queue jumps are short, additional lanes

for buses that can be combined with right turn lanes and introduced at various intersections along the corridor. Queue jumps allow the buses at signalized intersections to move in front of the through traffic on a green light.

Access consolidation increases safety and improves traffic flow by minimizing disruptions caused by turning vehicles by reducing the number of access points.

Alternative 3 is the master plan alternative. It would provide four travel lanes in the southbound direction and a 16 foot wide grass median would replace the existing reversible center lane.

The roadway would be widened to provide four northbound travel lanes from Seminary Place through Forest Glen Road and three northbound travel lanes would be maintained from 16th Street to Seminary Place.

A 13.5 foot wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue. A potential new traffic signal at Flora Lane would help bicyclists and pedestrians cross Georgia

Avenue. Flora Lane would be shifted south to intersect Georgia Avenue opposite the driveway entrance to the shopping center.

Left turn lanes would be included on Georgia Avenue at the intersections with Forest Glen Road, Flora Lane, Seminary Place and Seminary Road.

Bicycle accommodations would be limited to the existing pedestrian bicyclist bridge and the local street network.

Alternative 5 is similar to Alternative 3. It would provide four travel lanes in the southbound direction with a 17 foot wide center grass median. The roadway would be widened to provide four northbound travel lanes from Seminary Place through Forest Glen Road and three northbound travel lanes would be maintained from 16th Street to Seminary Place.

Unlike Alternative 3, Alternative 5 provides 16 foot wide outside travel lanes to accommodate on road bicycle use. A five foot wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue and would be set back from the

curb by five feet where space allows.

Alternative 5 has the following additional differences from Alternative 3:

- In an effort to minimize right-of-way impacts, the center line of the roadway would be shifted slightly near Columbia Boulevard to optimize available right-of-way in this area.
- The base Alternative 5 does not include a new traffic signal or left turn lanes on Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane.
- The ramp to southbound 16th Street wold be relocated to the signalized intersection with Northbound 16th Street.

Two options to Alternative 5 are currently under study.

Option B would provide a lane configuration similar to Alternative 5 with the addition of a potential new traffic signal on Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane. Flora Lane would be shifted south to intersect Georgia Avenue opposite the driveway entrance to the Seminary Place shopping center.

The new signalized intersection would

accommodate left turning movements onto Flora Lane and provide improved access for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists accessing Georgia Avenue and the Forest Glen Metro Rail Station.

The cycle track option would provide a lane configuration similar to Alternative 5 with the following difference. With this option, a two lane, two way cycle track would be provided along the west side of Georgia Avenue that would extend from the existing pedestrian bicyclist bridge to the existing southbound 16th Street ramp.

The cycle track would include two four-foot wide bicycle lanes and a three foot wide buffer that would separate motorized traffic from bicycle traffic.

Following the public hearing, the project team will perform further analyses on the alternatives and options presented tonight to address comments received from the agencies, local officials and the public.

After evaluating the project's impacts and considering comments from the public and the

regulatory and environmental agencies, the State Highway Administration will choose a preferred alternative and option.

Ms. Christina Brandt will now provide an environmental overview. Chrissy?

MS. BRANDT:

Thank you, Jeremy. A detailed analysis was performed to identify impacts on natural, cultural and socioeconomic environmental resources within the study area. A comparison of impacts is included in the brochure.

Maryland smart growth legislation is intended to limit sprawl by directing state funds for infrastructure improvements to county designated growth areas.

The project is located entirely within a priority funding area, therefore the project is in compliance with Maryland smart growth initiatives.

Up to five business property displacements would be required. Up to 44 properties would be impacted, and up to four acres of right-of-way would be required for the

build alternatives and options depending on the alternatives selected.

Outreach to limited English proficient populations has included publishing advertisements for public meetings in Spanish language newspapers, translating postcards and brochures for public meetings into Spanish, conducting door to door outreach along Georgia Avenue in advance of the June 25th, 2013 alternatives public workshop and providing a Spanish language interpreter at the workshop.

Surveys of Montgomery Hills customers and business owners and operators were also translated into Spanish. Further outreach and additional research of study area demographic and economic characteristics will be completed as the study progresses.

No disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low income populations would occur with this project.

The State Highway Administration determined that Alternatives 3 and 5 would require right-of-way from Calvary Lutheran Church

which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The right-of-way acquisition would result in an adverse effect on that property. The Maryland Historical Trust has concurred with this determination.

Section 4F of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 permits the use of land from a significant historic site only if there is no prudent and feasible alternative to the use of such land.

The action must also include all possible planning to minimize harm to the protected property. Options to avoid or minimize impacts to Calvary Lutheran Church have been developed in accordance with Section 4F regulations.

The Section 4F use of this property would result from roadside grading and the placement of a retaining wall which would be located within the historic boundary.

No buildings on the site would be directly impacted and access to the property

would not change.

The impact determinations for the church are identified in a draft Section 4F evaluation for this project. Consistent with the Section 106 procedures of the National Historic Preservation Act, public comments are requested regarding effects on historic properties.

No wetlands, streams or flood plains are located within the project area. Up to 7/10 of an acre of woodland impacts are anticipated. Trees will be replaced within the project limits to the extent possible.

SHA conducted an initial site assessment for the project to identify locations with the likely presence of hazardous materials, waste or petroleum products. The assessment identified 109 sites within the study area that vary in the level of their potential environmental concern, a preliminary site investigation screening as recommended for 29 of the sites to gather additional information about potential contamination.

An air quality analysis indicates that

no violations of the state and national ambient air quality standards would occur with any of the proposed alternatives and that the project meets the transportation conformity requirements of the Clean Air Act.

Twenty noise sensitive areas were identified within the project limits. Future noise levels will approach or exceed Federal Highway Administration noise abatement criteria at five of th 20 noise sensitive areas and noise abatement measures were considered.

Four of the impacted noise sensitive areas were found to meet feasibility and reasonableness criteria to warrant further consideration under the 2011 State Highway Administration noise policy.

Further analysis of the impacted noise sensitive areas will be completed during the design phase of the project.

This concludes the environmental overview. Please refer to the brochure for additional information.

Mr. Robert Hammond-Bey, the District 3

Real Property Manager, will now describe the procedures by which right-of-way is acquired for highway projects. Robert?

MR. HAMMOND-BEY:

Thank you, Christina. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. The acquisition of right-of-way and relocation assistance for this project cannot be undertaken until funds are programmed and included in a consolidated transportation program.

The State Highway Administration's procedures for this acquiring properties differ from the normal real estate transaction between individuals. The State Highway Administration is required to obtain at least one appraisal on each affected property and to offer the owners the amount determined by the appraisal to be just compensation.

Each property owner will be provided an opportunity to accompany the appraiser during the inspection of the property.

After just compensation is established a real property specialist will meet with the

1 affected owners and contact them by letter to
2 discuss the acquisition, explain how the
3 construction will affect their property.
4 At that time, our representatives will
5 also answer questions and explain the offer. If
6 the state and the property owner cannot reach an
7 agreement through negotiations, the rights of the
8 property owner will be protected by acquiring the
9 property rights through the eminent domain
10 process.
11 This process provides the means for the
12 property owners point of view to be heard and
13 permits the amount of just compensation to be
14 established by either a board of property review,
15 a judge, a jury based on testimony given on
16 behalf of both the owner and the state.
17 I assure you that we will make every
18 effort to keep our negotiations on friendly
19 terms.
20 Tenants' property rights are also
21 protected through this process. Brochures
22 entitled "Your Land and Your Highways" and
23 "Relocation Assistance, Your Rights and Benefits"

1 are available at the Right-of-Way station.
2 These brochures address the procedures
3 used by the State Highway Administration to
4 acquire right-of-way and explain the rights and
5 benefits provided through the relocation
6 assistance program.
7 The brochures should answer many of the
8 questions regarding the acquisition process in
9 the relocation assistance program.
10 Right-of-way requirements for each
11 alternative are shown in the summary of
12 alternatives in the project brochure.
13 State Highway Administration
14 representatives are available at the map displays
15 to answer any project related questions. I will
16 be available after the meeting to answer
17 questions about the right-of-way acquisition and
18 relocation assistance programs.
19 If at a later date questions arise,
20 please contact me at the District 3 Right-of-Way
21 office in Greenbelt using the contact information
22 listed in the project brochure.
23 Ms. Shabnam Izadi from the State Highway

1 Administration Office of Equal Opportunity will
2 now explain the State Highway Administration's
3 Title VI program as it relates to this project.
4 Shabnam?
5 MS. IZADI:
6 Thank you, Robert. Good evening,
7 everyone. As the Title VI officer for tonight's
8 public hearing, I will explain the significance
9 of Title VI and how it relates to the
10 transportation project planning process.
11 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
12 was put into effect to prohibit discrimination on
13 the basis of race, color or national origin.
14 To support the Act, the United States
15 government designated additional statutes, law,
16 regulations and executive orders to provide
17 guidance fro the effective execution of the
18 objectives of Title VI.
19 As a recipient of federal funds, SHA is
20 responsible for upholding the principles of Title
21 VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the
22 related guidance. SHA's policies and programs
23 should not discriminate against people on the

1 grounds of race, color, national origin, sex,
2 age, English proficiency, income level or
3 disability.
4 SHA's policies and programs should avoid
5 disproportionately high or adverse impacts on
6 minority populations and low income populations.
7 SHA seeks to provide citizens, stakeholder groups
8 and other interested parties with reasonable
9 opportunities to be involved in the planning
10 process.
11 With that said, I'm requesting your
12 assistance with our compliance efforts to ensure
13 that all phases of the transportation planning
14 process are carried out successfully and in a
15 fair and non-discriminatory fashion.
16 Therefore, please take a moment to read
17 the Title VI brochure and complete the
18 demographic survey. Both are located at the
19 Title VI station.
20 SHA will use the information you provide
21 to assist with developing better ways to engage
22 the public and the transportation planning
23 process.

Lastly, members of the public can file complaints if they feel SHA does not meet the expectations of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the related statutes.

The process for filing a complaint is outlined in the Title VI brochure located at the Title VI station. Now I will turn the hearing back to the Deputy District Engineer. Augie?

MR. REBISH:

Thank you, Shabnam. This concludes our formal presentation, and we will now accept public testimony.

Our purpose tonight is to listen to your comments and concerns, and at this time we will not address questions from the floor. However, staff members are available at the displays to address questions individually.

If you have not already notified us that you wish to speak this evening, please register your name with the receptionist. We will call the people to testify in the order in which they are registered.

For those who would rather not speak

publicly, a court reporter can record your comments privately. In addition, for those of you who prefer to submit written comments, forms for this purpose are available in the back of the brochure.

You may also email the project manager as noted in the brochure.

We are interested in hearing comments about the project from individuals, residents and representatives of businesses, organizations or community associations.

Please remember that we are recording this hearing and please come to the microphone when your name is called, speak directly into the microphone and provide your full name, address and any organization you may represent.

Please keep your comments to a reasonable length in order to allow everyone time to speak. At this time we welcome elected officials who wish to speak.

(Pause)

Okay. We will now begin with those who have registered to speak. First up would be Bart

Eisner.

MR. EISNER:

My name is Bart Eisner, I'm one of the two principals that own the Seminary Place shopping center that houses Staples and the CVS as anchors. E-I-S-N-E-R.

My partner and I, Mark Solomon, have owned this property for over 25 years, so we are fairly well vested in Montgomery Hills.

At the outset I really want to thank SHA for their due diligence, and this is an arduous task, I think we all realize that. The good news about Georgia Avenue is it has 80,000 plus average daily traffic, the bad news is it has 80,000 average daily traffic.

The beltway is I think I understand about 350,000 cars average daily traffic at this intersection. So we all realize that this work in progress is warranted, that there has to be some improvements made, because after awhile we will fall into gridlock.

I also want to take a moment to thank the gentleman I've been working most closely

with, their time and their effort, and that would be Jeremy Beck of SHA, Joe Harrison of SHA and Wesley Mitchell of McCormick Taylor who is part of the design firm. I appreciate their efforts in working with us.

Our little shopping center services Montgomery Hills well. If in fact we were to fail, of all the traffic improvements might be defeated because if we didn't have the services available to Montgomery Hills, then you'd have to get back in your cars and you'd have to travel to other areas for goods and services.

Our little shopping center acts like the traditional food/drug because Snyders is on the other side of the alley and we have CVS the drug store. So in fact we're very sensitive to these improvements that SHA is bringing forth and we know that our future success is directly correlated to how these improvements are implemented in the future.

So we have grave concern that because our -- is small and fragile, that any negative impact would be a severe problem for us and

1 probably create tenancy problems.
2 We think all of the plans, and they may
3 end up being a hybrid at the end, but we're so
4 concerned over one minor issue that has not --
5 that is still on almost every plan, and that's
6 the attempt to access through our property to
7 save the car wash, and the car wash has its own
8 stacking programs into Georgia Avenue along with
9 the stacking problems you see in the morning
10 coming off the highway to get on Georgia Avenue.
11 So it's a minor issue and we sort of are
12 taking a strong position that we really need that
13 access point to be relieved.
14 We're not sure why SHA is making such a
15 hard effort to save the car wash, but it's almost
16 on every plan. So I wanted again to thank SHA for
17 this time. I think they're doing a great job.
18 We're a proponent of all of the efforts
19 they are making. We just have to make sure that
20 there's no negative impact against our small
21 shopping center, because in the end our failure
22 would really hurt Montgomery Hills. Thank you.
23 (Applause)

1 MR. REBISH:
2 Next I'd like to call Michael Ravnitzky.
3 Sorry about the name.
4 MR. RAVNITZKY:
5 It's Michael R-A-V-N-I-T-Z-K-Y. So my
6 family and I live in the Forest Estates
7 neighborhood which is just to the north and east
8 of the project area and we -- my family members
9 and I and the neighbor -- our neighbors in the
10 community use the -- the -- the project area
11 extensively for -- by car, by -- by Metro, by
12 bike, pedestrian, by bus and we know this area
13 very well.
14 I'm very pleased to see that the Forest
15 Glen/Georgia Avenue intersection has been added
16 to the project and included in the project
17 because it's a key juncture point, and for our
18 neighborhood we have expressed on numerous
19 occasions and the state has recognized that this
20 is a very important location for access to the
21 Metro, for access to the Holy Cross Hospital
22 which is across -- down Forest Glen Road, and a
23 variety of other reasons, and the -- the danger

1 of that intersection right now for pedestrians
2 has been recognized broadly by the county and by
3 the state.
4 We need an east access to the Metro
5 Station. It's -- the -- the Metro stations
6 throughout the system have east accesses and west
7 accesses on major roads and this is the only one
8 I believe that doesn't, and without that we have
9 a very dangerous situation of pedestrians almost
10 being hit and being hit and accidents occurring
11 as a result of the traffic flow through that
12 intersection.
13 There is many pregnant women who go to
14 the maternity ward and go to the hospital on a
15 frequent basis. There are senior citizens who
16 cross the street, there are children that cross
17 the street and people commuting, and a lot of
18 people drive to the parking lot even though they
19 live nearby because it is very dangerous to cross
20 that street, especially in the -- in the winter
21 months when it starts getting darker earlier.
22 There is cars turning right without stopping and
23 so on.

1 So we think that a pedestrian access way
2 on the east side is critical and would be
3 important for the health of this entire corridor.
4 The ability to cross Georgia Avenue
5 really ties in with increased utilization of the
6 Metro Station and increasing pedestrian traffic
7 will reduce traffic going along the corridor.
8 People who use bikes will be able to
9 reduce traffic along the corridor and that is why
10 I would also like to mention I believe the
11 importance of a cycle -- of a cycle path as one
12 of the -- as one of the options is critical.
13 You can put the cycle way on the street,
14 but to have it as a separate thing -- on the
15 street it's -- it's really not that useful
16 because the cars and the bikes don't always
17 respect each other properly as we all know, and
18 having a separation there is critical.
19 The state has recognized the need for a
20 below grade passageway and submitted it for a
21 Tiger Grant, but that has not yet been funded for
22 construction. But it is designed, and the design
23 studies have been completed as far as I know to

at least some extent and I hope that the State Highway Administration can fold back already decided stuff into this project and make it part of it, because it is so important.

So any plan considered and adopted really should include a provision for an east side access way passage to the Forest Glen Metro Station. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

At this time I'd like to call Ramon Garcia.

(No response)

MR. REBISH:

Okay. Next candidate, Alison Gillespie?

MS. GILLESPIE:

Good evening. My name is Alison Gillespie, and that's spelled A-L-I-S-O-N, last name G-I-L-L-E-S-P-I-E.

I am, like Mike Ravnitzky who just spoke, a resident of Forest Estates which flanks Georgia Avenue just to the north and east of the project.

And as Mike stated, we have been through many hours of meetings with SHA up until this point trying to get better pedestrian safety and there have been many, many hours spent with You office.

Your office has done an excellent job of trying to reach out to us to address concerns about pedestrian safety along Forest Glen, but also the lower part of the corridor as shown on that map.

I do appreciate all the -- as someone else said, due diligence that has been put into this and effort that has been put into it. I would like to echo -- I won't repeat what Mike said. I will add to it and say that many, many, many of those hours were spent going over possible plans for the pedestrian access.

I know at one point we looked at a crazy picture of a bridge that looked like something from an M.C. Esher painting and the community flat out rejected it because not only was it ugly but it would demand pedestrians to cross the street going up multiple flights of steps and

using a very tiny elevator two or three people at a time.

It was determined through many different options just as we had here tonight at Forest Glen, we looked at lots of maps and the overwhelming community support was for the underground passageway to mirror the one on the other side of Forest Glen.

I would like to ask, beg, plead, that you honor the time already spent in gathering that feedback and be sure to incorporate that into the feedback being taken about the lower part of the effort.

Please don't let that get lost from institutional memory. I also would like to ask that we look more comprehensively.

Although I know that your ability to change traffic is limited to what's on this map, I think as urban planners, responsible urban dwellers, we have to acknowledge the reality of what's outside of that map.

The hospital is a major consideration. People getting to and from the hospital is a

major consideration and specifically I would like you to consider that lots of times people pull out of a hospital and are desperate to go and get gas before they get back on the road. They have been visiting loved ones.

And so access points to things like the gas stations are extremely important but also very, very confusing for someone from just the next town over, someone who never comes to Silver Spring, not to mention people who are on the beltway that pull off who have Nebraska or Iowa license plates. Almost everyone in this room has probably seen someone with an out of state license plate desperately trying to figure out how to get back on the beltway after they have headed south.

So we always need to be considering the larger picture besides just that thin blue line.

I also want to say there has been a great deal of concern in my neighborhood and throughout my entire part of Silver Spring community about proposals by Metro for what commercial building there might be at the Forest

1 Glen Metro Station.
2 Many of us, myself included, would
3 really love to see some commercial development
4 happen there to address some of the community's
5 needs. There is a building that's half empty at
6 that intersection that many of us would like to
7 see used to meet some of what the community
8 needs, but I would love to see as that happens it
9 doesn't happen in isolation from what you are
10 doing here.
11 And so again, I'm going to bed and plead
12 you, please don't do what bad bureaucracy does.
13 Talk to each other. Talk to the agencies right
14 there. Talk to the Metro people and please stay
15 aware of what that commercial development will do
16 and how it might impact all the options you have
17 just shown us.
18 Furthermore, I too would like to say
19 like Mr. Eisner the final comment I'll make is I
20 too find it very puzzling the extent to which
21 you're going to to not move the car wash. Just
22 going to let that lie.
23 (Applause)

1 I do want to say thank you for gathering
2 the feedback and thank you for the time allowing
3 us to speak tonight. Have a good evening.
4 (Applause)
5 MR. REBISH:
6 Okay. Next I'd like to call Joel Kolko?
7 Am I pronouncing that correct?
8 MR. KOLKO:
9 My name is Joel, J-O-E-L, last name is
10 Kolko, K-O-L-K-O. I live on Tilton Drive which
11 is also in the Forest Estates neighborhood. We
12 are well represented here tonight.
13 I -- my wife and I have lived in that
14 house for 33 years and we have seen changes to
15 the Georgia Avenue corridor, really none of which
16 have been positive.
17 I have seen many accidents on my way to
18 and from various points on Georgia Avenue,
19 walking or driving and I don't want to duplicate
20 what others have already said, so let me just say
21 that there are a couple of points that are
22 paramount to me.
23 First is that there be dedicated left

1 turn lanes from Georgia Avenue onto Forest Glen
2 in either direction heading towards the Metro
3 Station for northbound traffic, heading towards
4 Holy Cross Hospital for southbound traffic. I
5 think that's extremely important because many of
6 us in this room know that it is out of the
7 question for us to try to make a left turn from
8 Georgia Avenue onto Forest Glen, especially in
9 major travel periods. It is just too dangerous.
10 So a dedicated left turn lane is
11 paramount. Also we have seen sharply increased
12 traffic from the beltway with the revitalization
13 of Wheaton in particular and Wheaton Plaza and
14 various stores that have gone up. There is much
15 more traffic coming off the beltway heading north
16 on Georgia Avenue to the point where there have
17 been a couple of times when I could not exit onto
18 Georgia Avenue from the beltway because the line
19 waiting to get onto Georgia Avenue was extending
20 into the beltway and you must realize how
21 dangerous that can be both for Georgia Avenue and
22 for 495 as well.
23 So I know you have a lot to consider.

1 It's probably a thoroughfare unlike any others in
2 this area because of all the things that it
3 encompasses, the hospital, a Metro, the beltway,
4 a car wash.
5 There is just -- there is just too much
6 there and I wish you the best of luck in trying
7 to come up with a rationale plan, but I think
8 anything that can deal with the beltway exits and
9 also the dedicated left turn lanes coming from
10 Georgia Avenue to Forest Glen would be deeply
11 appreciated. Thank you.
12 (Applause)
13 MR. REBISH:
14 Okay. Next I'd like to call John
15 Rossetti.
16 MR. ROSSETTI:
17 Good evening. My name is John Rossetti,
18 that's R-O-S-S-E-T-T-I.
19 I live with my family on White Oak Drive
20 in the Woodside section of Silver Spring. Mr.
21 Beck started off earlier explaining how Georgia
22 Avenue is dominated by autos and other vehicles.
23 He also said that one of the goals of this plan

is to support transit use.

In the Woodside section of Silver Spring at this point, it is very difficult for us to traverse Georgia Avenue to get to the Forest Glen Metro. I know because I do it every week, every day. Right now I have to play a game of frogger to get across the exit ramps and entrance ramps to and from the beltway and then cross Georgia Avenue either at Forest Glen or at -- or just north of the beltway to get onto the pedestrian bridge.

The pedestrian bridge is nice, but it doesn't benefit people in the Woodside Forest section east of Georgia Avenue.

For that section of -- that's shown in this map there, Woodside Forest, the options that -- or the proposals that put a traffic signal and crosswalk at Flora Avenue are going to greatly increase the ability to safely and efficiently cross Georgia Avenue.

Presently if we want to cross Georgia Avenue in a more safe manner than trying to go north and -- and walk across Georgia Avenue and

play frogger, you've got to go south to cross at Seminary Place and then you've got to -- or you cross Georgia Avenue at Seminary Place and then you have to wait for a light at Seminary Place to cross to go north on Georgia Avenue.

So I think it's important that the light be included at Flora Avenue. Now, somebody earlier when we were looking at the maps, one of their primary concerns was what's it going to do to my property value, any of these things?

For the people who live in the Woodside Forest section of Silver Spring, it's my position and belief that the property values would -- would certainly increase with the light at Flora Avenue because you are giving access then to -- to the Forest Glen Metro.

I really don't have a position about the car wash really, so I can go either way on that. But thank you for your time and we look forward to seeing this project move forward, hopefully in my lifetime.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

Okay. Next I'd like to call Woody Brosnan.

MR. BROSNAN:

Woody Brosnan, W-O-O-D-Y, B-R-O-S-N-A-N. I live on Louis Avenue in North Woodside and I have been a member of the stakeholder's group on this project for I guess a couple of years now.

The North Woodside Montgomery Hills Citizens Association will have a written comment on the alternatives later. I just wanted to reiterate that our goals are to make this a safer - we need a median down Georgia Avenue to make that happen and we also prefer left turns at Seminary and Forest Glen at all times, including rush hour because we are plagued by cut through traffic because of the inability of folks to turn left on those streets during rush hour.

As a member of the stakeholder's group, I want to thank the team for their hard work, I want to thank them for consideration of my tunnel alternative, even though it didn't make the final cut.

I think the Option 5 alternatives which

I think is what we're really discussing here, are much better than the earlier drafts, so I appreciate the hard work that you put into it and thank you.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

Next up is Jennifer Sawin.

MS. SAWIN:

My name is Jennifer Sawin, that's J-E-N-N-I-F-E-R, S-A-W-I-N.

I live in the North Woodside area near Snyders. First of all, thank you to the team and I'd like to express my strong approval for especially a northbound dedicated left turn signal onto Seminary and to Forest Glen off of Georgia which will hopefully keep some Silver Spring outbound traffic on the major roads and off the neighborhood roads.

Second, I'd appreciate it if we could get some more clarification at some point on the cycle track, particularly the type of barrier that will be there between the cars and the bicycles. I'm thinking largely in terms of

what's the difference between an experienced adult bicycle commuter who can deal with a bike lane and say a middle schooler or a high schooler who really needs protection from the traffic in order to safely bike that route.

Specifically the type of barrier, it would be nice to get some clarification on the options there and it would be nice to get some clarifications to ensure the placement of storm drains and debris is such that the bike track will be level and will not become a gutter.

My third concern is for certain displacements. The removal of the three gas stations that's in most of the options. This is going to remove three stations of various brands leaving one station available for traffic inbound to Silver Spring and one station for traffic outbound from Silver Spring.

One of these stations on -- the one on the west side of Georgia is extremely difficult to navigate. The ones that would be removed are in fact fairly easy to navigate from the road and back onto the road. So I would appreciate it if

there would be some consideration of remediation rather than removal of some of those properties. I think it would help.

In the event that Columbia Avenue is closed, which is in a lot of these options, I'd request that there be some consideration of additional options to prevent the cut through traffic from coming through the residential areas, whether it would be possible to use some of the space of what I believe is an under utilized parking lot across from Snyders to allow traffic to come off of Seminary and get onto Columbia Boulevard as necessary, rather than going through areas that are adjacent to houses.

I truly appreciate all of your attention to the placement of signals. The pedestrian crossing at Flora Lane, as there is not, as several people have said, not currently comparable access in a significant portion of the study area. I think that's really important and I appreciate your inclusion of it.

The signal just under the beltway on southbound Georgia often takes drivers by

surprise, as another person pointed out, a lot of people who drive in this area are not from this area. I have actually not seen a collision, but I've seen a lot of people come to a really hard stop because they don't realize that signal is going to be there.

The signal just past the Calvary Church on northbound Georgia which is I believe designed to assist the flow of traffic from the innerloop onto northbound Georgia and also to assist traffic going from northbound Georgia onto the outer loop, unfortunately has the effect of blocking traffic from getting on northbound Georgia onto the innerloop because it backs up so far. It often backs up to Seminary Place, so I appreciate your consideration of removal of that and I trust that the timing of the Flora Lane signal would coordinate that so that that wouldn't be a problem.

The last thing I want to mention is that I appreciate this is -- this is not part of the study and it's something that just occurred to me. As Mr. Eisner pointed out, we really have a

walkable neighborhood.

Snyders, small shops and Staples and CVS in his shopping center, it would be -- I realize it's not your job, but I would greatly appreciate it if you could refer to the appropriate personnel the consideration of a crosswalk and some kind of safety for pedestrians crossing between Snyders and going over to pick up a pizza or get a prescription and come back and finish their grocery shopping.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I appreciate it.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

I'd like to call Merrie Blocker.

MS. BLOCKER:

Okay. My name is Mary Blocker. My first name is M-E-R-R-I-E and my last name is B-L-O-C-K-E-R.

I'm Mary Blocker and I live on Glen Ross Road in North Woodside near Columbia and I had three points that I wanted to make.

First, on the car wash. Often when you

1 come off the beltway, you can't move down that
2 lane because if it's a nice day because everybody
3 is going to the car wash and so there is -- it
4 really stops traffic to a dead stop and it has
5 always seemed to me that that must be illegal, at
6 least not if illegal it's wrong.
7 And so I too am wondering why fixing
8 that problem without going through Mr. Eisner's
9 center hasn't been considered. Why is the car
10 wash allowed to do that? I don't -- I don't
11 understand because it stops traffic on a major
12 road, so I wanted to add that.
13 On closing Columbia Boulevard so that
14 you can't come in from Seminary. I understand
15 that one of the ideas is that when you're coming
16 from Second Avenue going towards Georgia, you
17 would be able to make a right turn so that the
18 funeral home and the gas station would be able to
19 let their customers in.
20 If we did that, then the problem of cut
21 through traffic for the neighborhood on Columbia
22 Boulevard wouldn't be helped. But what I think
23 is that if we put a nice planter or something

1 like that on the north side of Rickwood which is
2 the first street so that you could make a right
3 turn in, go to the gas station and the funeral
4 home but you couldn't go into the neighborhood,
5 this is something that I've seen in Chevy Chase
6 used like that, that would solve the problem and
7 it would help what Jennifer just said about cut
8 through traffic.
9 Because right now if you close it off
10 entirely, then probably the traffic would go
11 through the neighborhood, but this way you could
12 get to those two commercial entities and not
13 bother the people in the neighborhood.
14 The last thing I want to raise is just a
15 suggestion here. We have a problem where if you
16 go at the -- I guess it would be the end of
17 Lucerne, it is on the east side of Columbia,
18 there is a little road and down there there's a
19 commercial building that also has a church in it.
20 When it was built, there was no parking
21 there. So when people use that building, they
22 park all over the neighborhood, especially on the
23 weekends when they are legally allowed to park

1 and in the evenings when they are legally allowed
2 to park.
3 Right across from that is a big wooded
4 island and I would like to suggest that you
5 consider the idea of putting in a small parking
6 lot there, maybe 30 cars that people who use this
7 commercial building could use.
8 Also the parking lot in front of Snyders
9 which could also help is very -- it's under
10 utilized, and I don't know if there's a way by
11 making it free, for example, that people could
12 use it. I know I don't use it sometimes not
13 because I mind paying the quarter when I'm going
14 to Snyder's, it just I can't find a quarter, so
15 I'm scared to use it.
16 But something so that it is utilized
17 that would take cars off the roads in our
18 neighborhood.
19 And lastly I want to say I've been
20 living here for 23 years. I've been worried
21 about Georgia Avenue for 23 years and so I thank
22 you so much for taking the time and the
23 consideration to help us make it better. Thank

1 you.
2 (Applause)
3 MR. REBISH:
4 I'd also like to call Etzy Salazar.
5 MS. SALAZAR:
6 It's E-T-Z-Y, last name S-A-L-A-Z-A-R.
7 Thanks.
8 So good evening. My name is Etzy
9 Salazar and I live -- I have been living at 1602
10 Flora Lane since 2011 which is located in the
11 Woodside Forest neighborhood.
12 I'm here to request for three
13 considerations to improve my neighborhood access
14 to our vendors as well as the safety for
15 commuters.
16 First, the traffic light to be placed on
17 Flora Lane. Second, a bike lane to be
18 incorporated and three, for better pedestrian
19 access on the corridor being discussed tonight.
20 The current environment is very
21 dangerous for all commuters. As a pedestrian, I
22 have almost been run over on Georgia Avenue and
23 the 495 exits. I too feel like I play frogger

1 when I do that.
2 As a bike commuter, I have to actually
3 ride out to Sligo Creek Parkway as car drivers do
4 not respect the rights of bicyclists.
5 As a car driver, I have a difficult time
6 turning into my neighborhood streets.
7 Furthermore, every time I have to turn onto Flora
8 Lane from Georgia Avenue, I have to turn very
9 fast because cars on the opposite lanes, they
10 almost hit me, so I've been dealing with this for
11 four years now.
12 I love the neighborhood, I think it's a
13 great neighborhood. It just needs to be
14 improved, and like I said it needs to be improved
15 for all commuters. Thank you.
16 (Applause)
17 MR. REBISH:
18 I'd like to call Sheldon Fishman.
19 MR. FISHMAN:
20 S-H-E-L-D-O-N, and my last name is
21 Fishman, F-I-S-H-M-A-N.
22 My name is Sheldon Fishman. I live east
23 of Georgia Avenue at Forest Glen Road, so I bet

1 you can guess the solution I'm going to ask for.
2 But let me -- and I will not repeat anything that
3 has already been said except to endorse what has
4 been said.
5 I want to try and give you a slightly
6 different add to the comments that have already
7 been made.
8 State Highway 97 is busy. I bet you
9 knew that already, and because it is so busy and
10 the idea here is to reduce the congestion of it,
11 but because it is so busy, Forest Glen Road which
12 is not a big highway but it builds up because
13 Georgia Avenue of course is so busy.
14 The consequence of that, and you've been
15 hearing people talk about frogger, is that
16 because the cars have built up so much that when
17 the lights finally turn for Georgia Avenue, there
18 is a lot of traffic going both north and -- and
19 south and it's going to be there the whole time
20 that the red light for Georgia is -- is there.
21 So you have all these pesky pedestrians
22 on your highway and you have heard a solution,
23 but I guess I want to add to, people have

1 mentioned Holy Cross, but -- Holy Cross Hospital
2 and you don't think of people in a hospital
3 commuting by Metro, but it's a big institution in
4 a community neighborhood that gets long largely
5 well with its community.
6 The Holy Cross Hospital has employees
7 and they can actually walk to Metro, and Holy
8 Cross has done quite a bit to try and encourage
9 their employees to use the Metro. We have
10 visitors that come to the hospital, and the
11 hospital also has clinics and a large doctor's
12 office building.
13 So the number of people that can come
14 from Metro to a hospital is -- is more than you
15 might imagine otherwise. The solution of course
16 that we are suggesting is to get those pedestrian
17 -- reduce the number of pesky pedestrians
18 crossing your highway and also driving their cars
19 from my neighborhood across 97 is an east
20 entrance.
21 People have been very careful to use the
22 word east entrance and -- and pedestrian passage
23 instead of the word tunnel, pedestrian tunnel,

1 and I just, again, want to point out to you that
2 there is already a pedestrian tunnel, I'm not
3 afraid of the word, from the parking lot of Metro
4 to Metro, and so when you think pedestrian
5 tunnel, think in terms of an airy, open thing
6 that people are using all the time every day.
7 This one would be from the east side and
8 would connect directly to the -- to the -- where
9 the fare machines are.
10 I guess I have just two other small
11 points to make, which is that the -- the map is a
12 little bit misleading in -- where the little M is
13 for the Metro stop because the Metro stop itself
14 is underground really right next to State Highway
15 97 and -- and the -- and why that's significant
16 is because if you walk from Holy Cross now, Holy
17 Cross Hospital now to the Metro in addition to
18 the frogger game, you also have to go beyond the
19 Metro and then back again.
20 So if you build this pedestrian
21 passageway, they will come and they will come
22 because the -- the path will actually be 40
23 percent shorter than the current path from Holy

Cross Hospital to Metro. It does not seem possible, but that's actually how the measurements go.

I have one last comment to make. I can't resist without suggesting that you think outside the box. Everybody wants to talk about thinking outside the box.

You have an opportunity to get this pedestrian entrance built by partnering with Holy Cross Hospital. They have been a great asset to our community and think of the prize you will get for partnering with a commercial company to solve a -- increase the transit and reduce the pedestrian traffic and the pedestrian injuries.

So I thank you for your consideration, and bottom line is please add the east entrance to every one of these options. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

I'd like to call Larry Mitchell.

MR. MITCHELL:

Larry Mitchell, L-A-R-R-Y, M-I-T-C-H-E-L-L.

I'm a member of -- I live in Woodside Forest, so I am directly affected by this lovely project which I've been waiting for for many years, so thank you SHA for putting everything into it.

My first thing that, you know, people have mentioned about left turn lanes, but I have to say that the big thing for me is don't even have a plan up there that doesn't have medians. They have said that multiple times for the last ten years.

You go to 355, medians. You go to 185, medians. That would be Connecticut and Wisconsin. We don't have -- we only have medians north of the beltway, kind of minuscule ones, but we have at least medians, but we have nothing in our section.

When you live in Woodside Forest, the sad thing for us is we actually can't get into our neighborhood without driving through somebody else's neighborhood, so Woodside Park residents if there are any here, should actually be pretty upset because we are driving through their

neighborhood because the only legal way that we can actually get into our neighborhood heading southbound on Georgia Avenue is by turning down Grace Church Road.

You can -- if you time the signal right, you can maybe accidentally make an illegal turn onto White Oak, but the point is that really the only legal way to get into our neighborhood is Grace Church Road. So we are driving through Woodside Park, you know, Woodside Park to get to Woodside Forest, and that's just ridiculous.

So I personally only want to see things up there that have green down the middle of Georgia Avenue, because that represents median and, you know, we should be able to turn.

Just because everybody loves to use our section of Georgia Avenue, we should be able to turn into our neighborhood and get out of our neighborhood, so that's extremely important to us.

I love the Flora Lane traffic light, which I have to admit a couple years ago I was against because White Oak actually comes and

actually enters into our neighborhood and there are more options to get into our neighborhood, where Flora Lane puts you on the north side of the neighborhood, but I have to say that, you know, speaking with some of the residents and finding out, you know, that $6.5 million pedestrian, you know, pedestrian bridge that we built years ago that I saw like three people walk across, finally people are starting to use it but our neighborhood doesn't really use it because you can't cross.

Most people can't cross. I'm on the -- I'm closer to Woodside Park, so I can actually cross at Columbia, but that four lane traffic light does make it so more pedestrians would be able to stop skipping across the on ramps and the on and off ramps of the beltway. That's pretty critical also.

So you know, I'm not going to get -- I agree with in the perfect world I agree with a tunnel under Forest Glen, that is the perfect world and I love the thing about partnering with Holy Cross Hospital.

The beltway traffic lights, you know, on a couple of the options or alternatives, one of them had totally get rid of them. You know, the issue is if you look at it from a standpoint from a traffic point, I'm a logistics major, I'm a transportation major, and so I look at this stuff and the problem is even though I don't use it that often getting off on the inner loop and heading northbound on -- northbound on Georgia is that if you don't allow the -- one of the reasons that traffic light went in was because it allows people to actually come off and not back that ramp up and it's a really sharp ramp and there is no distance, unlike if you are on the inner loop and you're heading southbound on Georgia, we have a -- we literally have a half mile lane off ramp lane but we don't have that for the other way.

So just one of the proposals, alternatives had it that we kept the northbound Georgia Avenue traffic light and that probably even though I'm not crazy about it, it probably needs to stay because otherwise you're going to back up the beltway which we don't need that. We

already have enough backup on the beltway.

You know, the beltway ramps are really I think something that on the alternatives have to be looked at a little more closely, because right now what happens is I come out on White Oak and of course I'm playing -- growing up driving in Boston, I'm playing chicken with people that decide that they can go up in the far left lane and then decide to jump over to get onto the beltway.

In Boston, we don't really -- we don't really like that, so we aren't always the nicest people in letting you in. If you decide to go up the far left lane two lanes over from where you should be, I'm not exactly going to let you in, and I don't.

The point is that on ramp really needs to be looked at, because what happens is somebody else mentioned it before, but people trying to get onto the inner loop, they can't really go because the lane is so backed up and the question is can it be looked at whether you can somehow, and I don't even know the answer to this, but

somehow separate the on -- the people getting on the -- the inner loop and the people getting on the outer loop, because that's the biggest problem right now is you have all these cars trying to get down to those two and they are so close together, it really causes a problem right by White Oak, really back to Seminary Place and all the way up to the beltway, so it's a real issue.

I'm not going to say anything about the car wash. Well, yes I will. I actually use that car wash now because my wife makes me. She likes the car wash. But I agree. In Rockville it is actually against the law to back up traffic, but Rockville has a special ordinance, so just everybody knows that.

They actually passed an ordinance. The county council has not passed an ordinance making it technically illegal, so we need to work on that somehow. We can all send an email to our council member and everything else, but that car wash is a serious problem.

They -- I do know that they do try to do

their best that they can, but it does back up the road. So that's about it. You know, if you can make sure a median gets built, I'll be happy. So that's it. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

Okay. Does anybody else wish to comment? Step up and state your name please, sir.

MR. KRUPNAK:

I did sign up to speak, but -- oh, I'm sorry. Lawrence Krupnak, L-A-W-R-E-N-C-E, K-R-U-P-N-A-K.

A prior audience member mentioned that you should communicate with Metro about potential development in that area. I just thought of something that Forest Glen, I heard that they are going to be building another facility at the annex and I heard something like 5,000 employees or something of that nature.

I'm not sure if you're aware of that, but there is a tremendous amount of traffic now coming down Seminary Road and going -- and then

1 Columbia Boulevard, people going to and from work
2 to the Forest Glen and also to the small
3 businesses that are in that Brookfield Lane area,
4 so you may want to look at coordinating with the
5 DOD and what they are planning to do at their
6 facility at Forest Glen annex, because we have a
7 lot of traffic backing up.
8 MR. REBISH:
9 All right. Does anyone else wish to
10 comment? Okay. Please state your name.
11 MS. HYMAN:
12 Maya, M-A-Y-A, Hyman, H-Y-M-A-N. I live
13 in Woodside Park, and I would love to be able to
14 go to this area as a destination point with --
15 oh, what? Oh.
16 As a destination point with my family
17 and not have to bring my car because it actually
18 is walkable. I just wanted to state that you
19 kind of I think have begun to address it, but it
20 would be nice to really incorporate more
21 greenery, a nicer plant life, trees, a feeling of
22 comfort if you're walking or biking or walking
23 between the shops and restaurants and the CVS and

1 all of that, and I just wanted to reiterate the
2 importance of making it feel like a place that
3 you would want to spend time in as a person with
4 additional greenery and benches maybe.
5 I don't know, just something, because I
6 feel like there's a lot about getting through
7 traffic and turn traffic and all of that, but
8 when you're there it would be nice to feel like
9 you want to be there. Thanks.
10 MR. REBISH:
11 Sir?
12 (Applause)
13 MR. SHUMAN:
14 My name is David Shuman, that's D-A-V-I-
15 D, S-H-U-M-A-N.
16 I have more of a question though than a
17 comment. I live on 16th Street --
18 MR. REBISH:
19 We're not taking questions here. This
20 is for comment only.
21 MR. SHUMAN:
22 One thing I have not been able to get
23 the answers for, and there are two other

1 homeowners adjacent to me -- limits of
2 disturbance buffer running through our front
3 yards because you're going to be moving 16th
4 Street.
5 The purpose of moving 16th Street to me
6 seems to be well, it gives me an opportunity to
7 have one more light to stop at before I can turn
8 and get home. I can go a little bit further to
9 get onto 16th Street, but there are no plans
10 evidently for that little wooded area which is
11 now going to be maybe accessible to the public or
12 not, but how do I find out?
13 It looks as though I'm pretty far off of
14 the limits of the project, but there is that line
15 going through my front yard.
16 MR. REBISH:
17 Would anyone else like to comment? Sir?
18 MR. DITZLER:
19 My name is Brian Ditzler, B-R-I-A-N, D-
20 I-T-Z-L-E-R.
21 I found it interesting that people
22 tonight have been commenting on what they like
23 without seeing which particular alternative it

1 is.
2 It seems that most what everyone has
3 asked for is Alternative 5B, because it has the
4 left turn lanes that we want, it has the Flora
5 Lane intersection, it gets rid of some lights
6 that back up the beltway, so I just wanted to
7 specifically say I as a resident of Woodside Park
8 and a bicycle proponent strongly believe that
9 Alternative 5 cycle track makes the most sense.
10 It is the only one that offers a
11 protected bicycle lane, and unfortunately we have
12 found in this city that unless the bicycle lane
13 is walled off and separated with some kind of
14 dividers, the cars don't honor it.
15 So the alternative 5 cycle track is
16 definitely the best alternative from my
17 perspective. Thank you.
18 (Applause)
19 MR. REBISH:
20 Does anyone else wish to comment?
21 MR. HYMAN:
22 Hi, my name is Rob Hyman, that's R-O-B,
23 H-Y-M-A-N is the last name.

I live in Woodside Park as well. I want to echo some of the previous comments made, but essentially my feeling is that these plans while definitely addressing some of the needs, they are a little bit tweaking around the edges.

This corridor is -- if you go through, it's kind of an ugly corridor. One of the reasons it is so pedestrian and bicyclist unfriendly is it is pretty awful to walk along it. I feel like these plans help in that respect, but they don't really go as far as they could or as far as they need to to really address the purpose and need of this project.

I think it needs to go deeper into really trying to make the corridor look nicer, so I think some of the aesthetic set of concerns raised are really important. It has got to feel like a corridor which you are comfortable walking along and which it is pleasant to walk along and you don't just feel simply wedged in against a major arterial. That's my comment.

MR. REBISH:

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. SHULMAN:

My name is Barbara Shulman, S-H-U-L-M-A-N.

I live on Columbia Boulevard on the west side of Georgia just before it hits 16th Street. So the specific point that I'd like to make is that I would like to see Columbia blocked at Rookwood so that there is access to the parking lot there, the public county parking lot and there is access to the gas station and the funeral home there.

It would not be as convenient for myself and my neighbors to get onto Georgia going north, but it would really cut -- cut down on the cut through traffic and we'd be interested in that.

I'm not sure -- I would really be interested if you were thinking about putting parking on that green space at 16th and Georgia and Columbia what it would look like. I don't think it's something I would support and that building, 9300 Georgia, should not have been built without parking, but I don't know that

that's the solution. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. REBISH:

All right. Does anyone else wish to comment?

(Silence)

Okay. If not, let the record show that no further spoken comments were offered. As mentioned earlier and as stated in the public notice, we will hold the formal record open until December 31st, 2015 for your written comments.

Thank you for attending tonight's public hearing. We appreciate your interest in this project. This hearing is adjourned. Good night.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned.)

Keyword Index

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STATE OF MARYLAND

I, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland, do hereby certify that the within transcript was recorded electronically and transcribed under my supervision to produce the aforegoing typewritten transcript in a true and accurate manner.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not of counsel to any of the parties, nor am I an employee of counsel, nor any relation to any of the parties, nor in any way interested in the outcome of this action.

AS WITNESS, my hand and Notarial Seal this 12th day of December, 2015.

William Alan Bodenstein
Notary Public

My commission expires: 11/16/19

PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS

PROJECT PLANNING STUDY

PRIVATE TESTIMONY

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

LOCATION/DESIGN

EVENING PUBLIC HEARING
(Private Testimony)

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Montgomery Blair High School
51 University Boulevard East
Silver Spring, MD 20901

December 1, 2015

My name is Adrienne Wolpoff. My family owns the Dale Shopping Center on the 9300 Block of Georgia Avenue. This is the center with Silver Cycles, Leeman Cleaners, Tropical Ice Cream Shop and Goldberg's Bagels, to name a few. Rinaldi Funeral Home is located in the rear of the center on Columbia Boulevard.

We have owned this shopping center for over 35 years. We have taken great pride in maintaining this "neighborhood friendly" center which has served many driving customers as well as the local residents.

I am standing here this evening because I think it is important that the State Hwy commission realize the impact that their proposed changes would have on all the people involved in my shopping center.

We are in a very vulnerable position to lose a huge part of our "very limited" parking lot. If any of the State Hwy plans are enacted, our tenants may not be able to survive. If customers are unable to easily park, they will likely find other similar businesses to frequent where parking is not a challenge.

In addition, as per the various highway changes, a median strip, without cut throughs, is slated to be situated on Georgia Avenue, parallel to The Dale Center. With the addition of a median strip, northbound cars will not be able to access my shopping center. The only way the northbound drivers can gain entry into our shopping center is by making U Turns further up Georgia Avenue at a busy intersection.
This set up will undoubtedly chip away at my tenants client base.

Last on my list, is the problem with closing off of the cut through between Seminary Road and Columbia Blvd. My tenant, Rinaldi Funeral Home, is located at 9241 Columbia Boulevard, in the rear of The Dale Center. If the cut through connecting Seminary Rd. and Columbia Blvd. is closed, clients and customers of my tenant will have no choice but to drive through residential streets to reach the tenant. This makes for a very undesirable location for a commercial location.

All in all, I am very worried and upset about the negative impact that could befall our very busy shopping center from the various highway changes I have mentioned.

My family and I would greatly appreciate further attention to the proposed plans to minimize or eliminate the negative impact that they may have on our property.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Adrienne Wolpoff

MS. WOLPOFF:

My name is Adrienne Wolpoff, that's spelled A-D-R-I-E-N-N-E, last name W-O-L-P-O-F-F.

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MS. BAKE:

My name is Sandra Bake, last name is spelled B-A-K-E.

I am a resident of Park and I just want to state that you know, we live next to I believe it is Corwin Drive and all the proposals have a parking lot being built there.

We -- that would mean that there would be a lot of extra cut through traffic on Lucerne Avenue for people who are stuck in traffic to get across to their own neighborhoods in Woodside Park if they, you know, can't make a left or

right-hand onto Columbia.

I think it's unfair since we have a very small block with many, many children on it. I feel like we should be blocked off as well and so we wouldn't have to carry the burden of all that extra traffic.

I also want to state that the car wash is a menace. We really should get rid of the car wash that they want to improve. You know, that alone would improve a great deal of traffic in the area.

The third thing is that I, you know, the purple line is proposed to be built soon and that will be down on 16th Street and there is no -- isn't a great way to cross Georgia Avenue, you know, from where we live on Lucerne, you know, there is a normal crosswalk here, but then how do we get, you know, I don't think there has been a great deal of thought on how residents are supposed to get to the new purple line station walking from our neighborhood down 16th Street, so I think that's something that needs to be considered as well. All right. Thank you.

1 That's the end.
2 (Whereupon, the private testimony adjourned.)

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STATE OF MARYLAND

I, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland, do hereby certify that the within transcript was recorded electronically and transcribed under my supervision to produce the aforegoing typewritten transcript in a true and accurate manner.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not of counsel to any of the parties, nor am I an employee of counsel, nor any relation to any of the parties, nor in any way interested in the outcome of this action.

AS WITNESS, my hand and Notarial Seal this 12th day of December, 2015.

William Alan Bodenstein
Notary Public

My commission expires: 11/16/19

PUBLIC NOTICE

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS

PROJECT PLANNING STUDY

- Newspaper Advertisements
  (Published in the following newspapers)
  - o Washington Post
  - o Montgomery Sentinel
  - o Afro American
  - o El Tiempo Latino

- Post Card

- Brochure

PUBLIC NOTICE

Maryland Department of Transportation

SHA State Highway Administration

MARYLAND 97

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, WILL CONDUCT A LOCATION/DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY FROM MD 192 (FOREST GLEN ROAD) TO MD 390 (16TH STREET) IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Montgomery Blair High School
51 University Boulevard East
Silver Spring, MD 20901
6:00 pm – Maps/Displays Available
7:00 pm – Presentation/Testimony

Snow Date – Monday, December 14, 2015
Meeting will be held on snow date if county public schools are closed or if the county's snow emergency plan is in effect.

The purpose of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study is to establish a balanced approach to transportation within the Georgia Avenue corridor by evaluating existing vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist mobility and safety while accommodating proposed transit enhancements and establishing a sense of place within the Montgomery Hills community. Alternatives under consideration include: Alternative 1 – No-Build, Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Alternative 3 – Master Plan, and Alternative 5 – Four Lanes Southbound/Three to Four Lanes Northbound. Options under study for Alternative 5 include: Option B – Flora Lane Intersection, and the Cycle Track Option. This project is currently funded for Project Planning only. It is not funded for Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, or Construction. More information about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study is available on SHA's website at www.roads.maryland.gov under Projects and Studies, SHA Projects Page, and Montgomery County.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide all interested persons the opportunity to comment on the proposed location, general design, and associated social, economic, cultural and natural environmental impacts of the project alternatives.

Beginning at 6:00 pm, the project alternatives and other information will be on display. Public hearing displays will also be available on the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) website (referenced below). Representatives from the SHA will be available to discuss the project and record your comments.

A formal presentation beginning at 7:00 pm and lasting approximately 30 minutes will include a description of the project alternatives, a summary of environmental impacts, information on right-of-way acquisition and relocation-assistance procedures, and an explanation of Title VI of the SHA Equal Opportunity Program. The presentation will be followed by the receipt of public testimony.

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 USC 303(c)) permits the use of land from a significant publicly-owned public park or recreation area, or significant historic site only if there is no prudent and feasible alternative to the use of such land and if the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the protected property resulting from such use.

SHA, in consultation with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) and other consulting parties, has identified two properties within the study area (Grace Episcopal Cemetery and Confederate Monument, and Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church) that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Alternatives 3 and 5 would require right-of-way from the Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church. On August 4, 2015, MHT concurred that these alternatives would result in an adverse effect on the Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church.

SHA completed a Draft Section 4(f) evaluation to assess the likely effects of the project on Calvary Lutheran Church and evaluate options that avoid or minimize impacts on those resources caused by the build alternatives. The Section 4(f) Evaluation will determine whether feasible and prudent avoidance alternatives to the use of the Church property exist, and whether all possible planning to minimize harm to the resources has been performed. A copy of the Draft Section 4(f) evaluation will be available for review at the public hearing. Consistent with the Section 106 procedures of the National Historic Preservation Act, public comments are requested regarding effects on historic properties. For additional information on SHA's effect determination, contact the Project Manager.

Individuals and representatives of organizations who wish to testify may submit a request to Mr. Jeremy Beck, Project Manager, Project Management Division, Maryland State Highway Administration, 707 N. Calvert Street, MS C-301, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 or may call 410-545-8518 or toll-free 1-800-548-5026, or via email at jbeck@sha.state.md.us on or before November 23, 2015. You may also sign the Speakers List at the registration desk on the date of the hearing. To include written statements and other exhibits in the public hearing transcript, submit them to the Project Manager at the above address until December 31, 2015. The public hearing transcript will be available for review approximately eight weeks after the public hearing at the locations listed below and on SHA's website. Please contact the Project Manager to confirm the transcript's availability.

Elected officials will be given the opportunity to speak first. Persons on the Speakers List will then be called to testify in the order in which their requests were received. Those who did not pre-register will be invited to speak before oral testimony concludes. SHA may set a time limit of three minutes for each speaker if a large number register to testify. Private and written testimony will also be accepted.

Persons on the project mailing list will receive information about project developments and opportunities for public involvement as the study progresses. Persons not on the mailing list may add their contact information by phoning, writing, or emailing the Project Manager. Brochures and comment forms will be available at the hearing and will be mailed to persons on the mailing list.

Beginning on November 30, 2015 the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the project will be available on the project website.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE:

The Maryland Relay Service can assist teletype users at 711. Persons requiring assistance to participate should contact the Project Manager. SHA will provide an interpreter for persons with hearing/speech disabilities or those who need assistance with the English language. To request assistance, please contact the Project Manager no later than November 23, 2015. For more information on this and other SHA projects, visit www.roads.maryland.gov and click on Projects and Studies, and Public Meetings.

November 1, 2015

November 15, 2015
A-0763

Gregory C. Johnson, P.E.
State Highway Administrator

MD 97 - Montgomery Hills
Project Planning Study
Location/Design Public Hearing
December 1, 2015

MARYLAND
97

The Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration (SHA), Montgomery County, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) invite interested persons to attend a Location/Design Public Hearing for the MD 97 - Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study. The study limits extend along MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) between MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) and MD 390 (16th Street). The purpose of the project is to establish a balanced approach to transportation within the MD 97 corridor by evaluating existing vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist mobility and safety, while accommodating proposed transit enhancements and establishing a sense of place in Montgomery Hills.

The purpose of the Location/Design Public Hearing is to formally present the results of the detailed engineering and environmental studies that have been conducted for this project. The public hearing will provide an opportunity for interested individuals, associations, citizen groups, and government agencies to offer spoken and/or written comments for the project record before an alternative is selected. Maps and other exhibits depicting the study's alternatives and other information will be on display for public viewing, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Representatives from SHA, Montgomery County, and FHWA will be available to answer project-related questions and receive comments. A formal presentation lasting approximately 30 minutes will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be followed by public testimony.

For more project information, visit **www.roads.maryland.gov** and click on **Projects**, **SHA Projects Page**, **Montgomery County, and MD 97, 16th Street to Forest Glen Road** or use the QR code on the back of the postcard.

MD 97 - Montgomery Hills
Estudio de Planificación de Proyecto
Audiencia Pública Ubicación/Diseño
1 de diciembre de 2015

MARYLAND
97

La Administración Estatal de Autopistas (SHA, en inglés) del Departamento de Transporte de Maryland, el Condado Montgomery y la Administración Federal de Autopistas (FHWA, in inglés) invitan a las personas interesadas a asistir a una Audiencia Pública sobre Ubicación/Diseño para el Estudio de Planificación del Proyecto MD 97 Montgomery Hills. Los límites del estudio se extienden a lo largo de MD 97 (Georgia Avenue), entre MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) y MD 390 (16th Street). El propósito del proyecto es establecer un acercamiento balanceado a la transportación en el corredor de MD 97 mediante la evaluación de la movilidad y seguridad de vehículos, peatones y ciclistas, a la vez que se da cabida a las mejoras de tránsito propuestas y se establece un sentido de pertenencia en Montgomery Hills.

El propósito de la Audiencia Pública sobre Ubicación/Diseño es presentar formalmente los resultados de los estudios detallados de ingeniería y ambientales que se han realizado para este proyecto. La audiencia pública dará la oportunidad a las personas interesadas, asociaciones, grupos de ciudadanos y agencias gubernamentales a ofrecer comentarios orales o por escrito para el expediente del proyecto antes de que se seleccione una alternativa. Se expondrán al público los mapas y otras muestras que representan las alternativas del estudio y otra información a partir de las 6:00 PM. Habrá representantes del SHA, del Condado de Montgomery y del FHWA disponibles para contestar preguntas relacionadas con el proyecto y recibir comentarios. A las 7:00 PM comenzará una presentación formal que durará aproximadamente 30 minutos, seguida de los testimonios del público.

Para obtener más información sobre el proyecto, visite **www.roads.maryland.gov** y haga clic en **Projects**, **SHA Projects Page**, **Montgomery County**, and **MD 97,16th Street to Forest Glen Road**, o use el código QR en el reverso de la tarjeta postal.

MARYLAND 97

MD 97 - Montgomery Hills Location/Design Public Hearing

SHA State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

707 N. Calvert Street
MS C-301
Baltimore, MD 21202

QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE?

PREGUNTAS Y AYUDA?

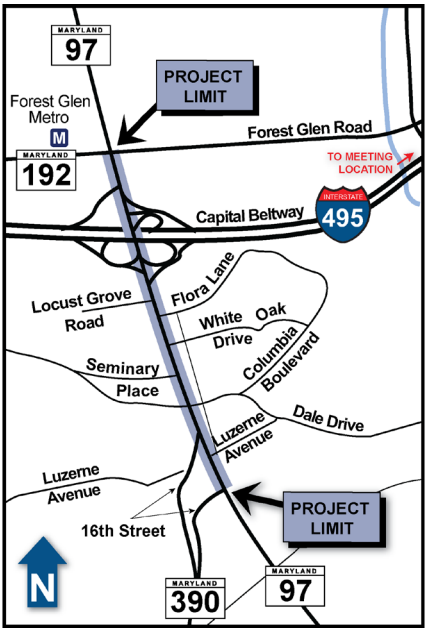
Jeremy Beck, Project Manager
State Highway Administration
1-800-548-5026
jbeck@sha.state.md.us

www.roads.maryland.gov

Maryland RELAY DIAL 7-1-1

MD 97 - Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

MARYLAND 97



Location/Design Public Hearing

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

Montgomery Blair High School
51 University Boulevard East
Silver Spring, MD 20901

6:00 PM – Maps/Displays Available
7:00 PM – Presentation/Testimony

Snow Date – Monday, December 14, 2015
Meeting will be held on snow date if county public schools are closed or if the county's snow emergency plan is in effect.

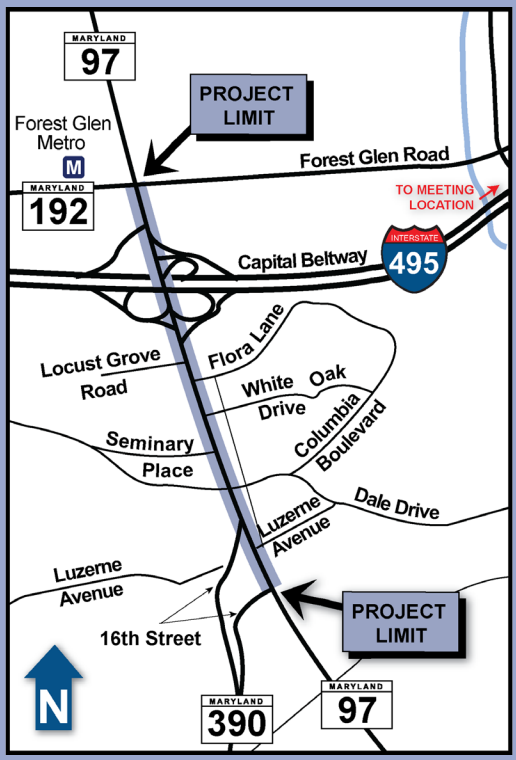
Fecha alterna por nieve – Lunes, 14 de diciembre de 2015
La reunión se llevará a cabo en la fecha alterna por nieve si las escuelas públicas del condado están cerradas o el plan de emergencia de nieve del condado está vigente.

(ESPAÑOL DENTRO)

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

from MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) to MD 390 (16th Street)

LOCATION/DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING



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SI DESEA UNA COPIA DE ESTE VOLANTE EN ESPAÑOL, POR FAVOR CONTACTARSE CON EL SR. JEREMY BECK, GERENTE DE PROYECTO, LLAMANDO AL 410-545-8518 (GRATIS AL 1-800-548-5026), utilice este código QR para acceder vía internet una copia traducida del volante, o visite nuestro sitio web en: www.roads.maryland.gov, y haga clic en Projects; SHA Projects Page; Montgomery County; MD 97, Georgia Ave. 16th Street to Forest Glen Road.

SHA State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

MONTGOMERY COUNTY 1776 MARYLAND

Project No. MO224M11

Project Planning Team

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Mr. Brian Young
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Ms. Keilyn Perez, Area Engineer
Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division
City Crescent Building
10 South Howard Street, Suite 2450
Baltimore, MD 21201

Introduction

The Maryland Department of Transportation's State Highway Administration (SHA), Montgomery County, and the Federal Highway Administration are conducting a Project Planning Study on MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) between MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) and MD 390 (16th Street), a distance of approximately 0.7 mile. The study area is located in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Purpose Of The Study

The purpose of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study is to establish a balanced approach to transportation within the Georgia Avenue corridor by evaluating existing vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist mobility and safety while accommodating proposed transit enhancements and establishing a ***sense of place**** within the Montgomery Hills community.

Purpose Of The Hearing

The purpose of the Location/Design Public Hearing is to formally present the results of the detailed engineering and environmental studies that have been conducted for this project. The public hearing will provide an opportunity for interested individuals, associations, citizen groups, and government agencies to offer spoken or written comments for the project record before an alternative is selected.

Hearing Format

Maps and other exhibits depicting the study's ***alternatives*** and other information will be on display for public viewing, beginning at 6:00 PM. Representatives from SHA, Montgomery County, and FHWA will be available to answer project-related questions and receive comments. A formal presentation lasting approximately 30 minutes will begin at 7:00 PM and will be followed by public testimony. Testimony may also be given privately to a court reporter. All proceedings will be recorded, and a ***transcript*** will be prepared. The transcript will be available for public review approximately eight weeks after the hearing, on the project website, and at the project-area libraries and government facilities listed at the back of this brochure.

How To Comment On The Study

SHA encourages your participation in the public hearing and during the Project Planning process. The postage-paid return mailer included in this brochure will enable you to submit your comments. Additional copies of these mailers will be available at the receptionist's desk during the hearing. Written comments for inclusion in the project record and the hearing transcript may be submitted until December 31, 2015.

*All terms that appear in ***bold italics*** are defined in the glossary at the back of this brochure.

Project Mailing List

You may add your name to the project mailing list by completing the enclosed mailer or giving your information to the receptionist at the hearing. If you have previously submitted your name and address, or if you have received this brochure in the mail, you are already on the project mailing list.

Project Status

The MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study is included in the following programs and plans: (1) Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Development and Evaluation Program of the *Fiscal Year 2015-2020 Consolidated Transportation Program*; (2) SHA's Long-Range Plan, the *Highway Needs Inventory*; and (3) Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) *North and West Silver Spring Master Plan*, adopted in 2000. The project is currently funded by Montgomery County for Project Planning only. If SHA selects a build alternative that receives ***Location and Design approvals*** from FHWA and SHA, the project may become eligible for funding for Final Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction.

Project History

The MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study was initiated in July 2011, and a project-initiation newsletter was distributed to the public in February 2012. The Project Team held a Purpose and Need Open House on March 13, 2012, at Woodlin Elementary School in Silver Spring to introduce the public to the study and solicit comments. Seventy-five people attended the workshop, and 776 comments were received from interested individuals.

At the Alternatives Public Workshop held at Woodlin Elementary School on June 25, 2013, SHA presented seven preliminary alternatives and two options to the public. Estimated cost, right-of-way requirements, ***displacements***, number of properties impacted, and estimated natural environmental impacts were summarized for each of the preliminary alternatives. In advance of the workshop, SHA distributed a brochure summarizing the project. One hundred eighteen people attended the workshop.

The Project Team held several targeted meetings with community associations and area business representatives to present project information and answer project-specific questions. In addition, the Project Team formed an 18-member ***Stakeholder Group*** representing civic associations, faith communities, Holy Cross Hospital, area businesses, bicycle proponents, Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, commuters, residents, transit users, and other members recommended by local elected officials. Six Stakeholder Group meetings have been held to date. The group has provided comments and suggestions that have been evaluated and incorporated into the alternatives whenever possible. Coordination with the Stakeholder Group will continue until the Project Planning process is completed.

In summer 2015, SHA conducted a survey of Montgomery Hills customers and business owners/operators to help the project team understand which improvements would be effective in encouraging customers to shop more frequently in the neighborhood. Postcards announcing the availability of an online survey were mailed to approximately 17,000 households in the project area. In addition, project team members conducted on-site surveys on September 3, 2015, providing an opportunity for shoppers and business owners/operators to complete the surveys in person. Survey results will be presented at the public hearing.

Existing Conditions
Between 16th Street and the I-495 (Capital Beltway) Interchange, the Georgia Avenue corridor has three travel lanes in each direction. South of the Capital Beltway, a reversible center lane provides a fourth lane southbound in the morning and northbound in the evening to accommodate commuters during peak periods. During non-peak travel periods, this reversible lane operates as a two-way center left-turn lane. Left turns from Georgia Avenue onto side streets are restricted during peak travel periods. Between I-495 and Forest Glen Road, Georgia Avenue consists of four travel lanes in each direction, separated by a ***median***.

The posted speed limit in the project area is 35 MPH. The following intersections along Georgia Avenue are signalized:

- Forest Glen Road
- I-495 Interchange ramps
- Seminary Place
- Seminary Road/Columbia Boulevard
- 16th Street (northbound)

Forty-two commercial properties, 22 access points, three alleys for local access, and two county-owned public parking lots are located along Georgia Avenue. A pedestrian/bicyclist facility crosses the Capital Beltway along the west side of Georgia Avenue, and crosswalks are provided at five intersections. Bus stops are located near Forest Glen Road and Seminary Place. Georgia Avenue also provides direct access to the Forest Glen Metrorail Station.

Project Need

The current mix of local and regional (commuter) traffic, coupled with the existing roadway design and sidewalk conditions, creates an automobile-dominated environment that is not always conducive to other modes of transportation. As a result, local business accessibility, pedestrian accessibility, bicycle connectivity, and transit use have become major challenges within the project area.

Traffic Operations

SHA developed ***Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)*** AM and PM peak-hour volumes for this study. 2011 Existing and 2040 Projected No-Build AADT and Percent Growth along Georgia Avenue are shown in **Table 1**.

TABLE 1 - 2011 Existing and 2040 Projected No-Build AADT

Georgia Avenue Segment	Average Daily Traffic (vehicles per day)		
	2011 Existing	2040 Projected	Percent Growth
North of Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	65,000	75,000	15.3%
Forest Glen Road to I-495	73,000	84,000	15.1%
I-495 to Seminary Place	81,000	93,000	14.8%
Seminary Place to Seminary Road/ Columbia Boulevard	71,000	82,000	15.5%
Seminary Road to Southbound 16th Street	66,000	76,000	15.2%
Southbound 16th Street to Northbound 16th Street	51,000	59,000	15.7%
South of 16th Street	35,000	41,000	17.1%

Level of Service

SHA conducted a Level of Service (LOS) analysis for existing (2011) and projected (2040) No-Build and Build conditions for the preliminary alternatives. LOS is a measure of the congestion experienced by drivers and ranges from “A” (free flow, with little or no congestion) to “F” (failure, with stop-and-go conditions). LOS is normally computed for the peak periods of a typical weekday, with LOS D (approaching unstable flow) or better generally considered acceptable for intersections or highways in urban and suburban areas. At LOS E, volumes are at or near capacity. Once a segment exceeds capacity, extensive ***delay*** begins. LOS F represents conditions where demand exceeds capacity. Traffic experiences operational breakdowns, with stop-and-go conditions and extremely long delays at signalized intersections. LOS and delay times for the 2011 Existing Conditions and the 2040 Projected No-Build are provided in **Table 2**.

TABLE 2 – Overview of 2011 Existing and 2040 Traffic								
	Existing Conditions (2011)				Alternative 1: No-Build (2040)			
Signal Intersection LOS	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	D	48	C	32	E	66	C	32
I-495 Outer Loop Ramps	B	14	B	16	B	16	B	16
I-495 Inner Loop Ramps	C	34	A	8	D	43	B	11
Flora Lane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seminary Place	D	41	B	11		47	B	12
Seminary Road	C	25	C	32	C	25	D	36
16th Street (MD 390)	C	25	C	27	C	26	C	26

	Alternative 2: TSM/TDM (2040)			
Signal Intersection LOS	AM		PM	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	F	133	D	41
I-495 Outer Loop Ramps	D	53	C	27
I-495 Inner Loop Ramps	E	63	B	14
Flora Lane	-	-	-	-
Seminary Place	E	59	B	17
Seminary Road	C	31	D	46
16th Street (MD 390)	D	51	F	123

Legend	
LOS	Delay (sec)
A	<10
B	10-20
C	20-35
D	35-55
E	55-80
F	>80

TABLE 2 (Continued) – Overview of 2011 Existing and 2040 Traffic								
	Alternative 3: Master Plan (2040)				Alternative 5: Four Lanes Southbound; Three to Four Lanes Northbound (2040)			
Signal Intersection LOS	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	F	81	E	79	D	52	D	42
I-495 Outer Loop Ramps	C	22	F	87	B	11	C	21
I-495 Inner Loop Ramps	C	33	C	34	-	-	-	-
Flora Lane	A	7	B	16	-	-	-	-
Seminary Place	D	47	C	34	D	35	B	14
Seminary Road	C	24	D	38	C	23	C	34
16th Street (MD 390)	C	24	F	148	B	15	F	94
	Alternative 5, Option B: Flora Lane Intersection (2040)				Alternative 5 Cycle Track Option (2040)			
Signal Intersection LOS	AM		PM		AM		PM	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	E	64	D	51	E	64	D	51
I-495 Outer Loop Ramps	C	25	B	19	C	25	B	19
I-495 Inner Loop Ramps	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Flora Lane	A	10	A	10	A	10	A	10
Seminary Place	E	60	D	46	E	60	D	46
Seminary Road	D	27	D	36	D	27	D	36
16th Street (MD 390)	B	16	F	81	B	16	F	81

Legend	
LOS	Delay (sec)
A	<10
B	10-20
C	20-35
D	35-55
E	55-80
F	>80

Safety

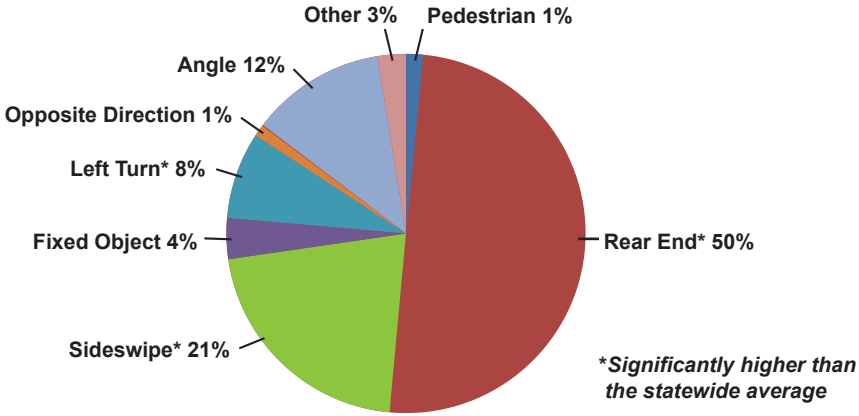
During the three-year period from 2012 through 2014, 297 police-reported crashes occurred within the study limits. Approximately 94 of those crashes (32 percent) resulted in injuries. No fatalities were documented. Rear-end, sideswipe, and left-turn crashes each occurred at a rate significantly higher than the statewide average for those types of crashes on similar roadways. The percentages of all crash types along the project corridor are shown in the chart below.

Heavy traffic volumes during peak hours have the greatest impact on safety along the study corridor, as reflected in the high occurrence of sideswipe and rear-end collisions. Heavy traffic volumes decrease the following distance between vehicles, lessening driver reaction time and resulting in rear-end collisions, which account for almost half of all collisions along the corridor. Approximately 21 percent of the crashes involved vehicle sideswipes, which are typically associated with a high volume of merging vehicles and lane changes. The left-turn collisions are related to turning-movement conflicts and highly congested roadways.

During off-peak periods, the two-way center left-turn lane encourages unmanaged circulation patterns and increases safety concerns, as evidenced by the high proportion of sideswipe, left-turn, and angle crashes that account for just under half of all crashes along the corridor. These types of crashes typically reflect unsafe lane-change and turning-movement conditions. Because the center turn lane allows uncontrolled turning movements, motorists are unable to anticipate accurately when they may have to contend with turning vehicles. Motorists using the two-way center travel lane must make assumptions about the intentions of drivers of oncoming vehicles and determine whether those drivers are turning or continuing on their current paths.

The safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists along the MD 97 Montgomery Hills corridor is also adversely impacted by a large number of commercial access points and limited access consolidation in both directions.

MD 97 Crashes 2012 - 2014



Vehicular Mobility and Traffic
Vehicular mobility in Montgomery Hills is impeded by several factors, including high traffic volumes along Georgia Avenue, restricted left turns during morning and evening peak periods (which make it more difficult to access neighborhoods and businesses), and numerous commercial access points.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Accessibility
Sidewalks along this corridor are generally non-compliant with ***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*** standards. Signs and utility poles on sidewalks in both directions along Georgia Avenue present numerous obstacles and reduced-width areas for people who use wheelchairs. Those who walk or bicycle through the project study area must constantly be alert for approaching vehicular traffic, drivers exiting the access points, and drivers turning from the uncontrolled center turn lane during off-peak periods.

Transit Accessibility
Transit accessibility is impeded by several factors, including large traffic volumes and the pedestrian and bicyclist obstacles noted in the preceding section of the brochure. Direct ADA access to the Forest Glen Metrorail Station from Georgia Avenue does not exist. Peak-period restrictions on left turns from Georgia Avenue onto Forest Glen Road and relatively short signal times for pedestrians crossing Georgia Avenue make commuter access to the station difficult, especially during peak periods.

Sense of Place
The project seeks to create a distinctive character for the community and improve the roadway along the Georgia Avenue project corridor by:

- minimizing the number of locations where crashes could occur;
- promoting safety within the project limits by providing features that accommodate all roadway users; and
- enhancing the appearance of the project corridor by including landscape features.

Measures Of Effectiveness

In an effort to preserve and enhance the community's character while improving transportation accessibility, SHA and Montgomery County have adopted a holistic approach for developing the project's alternatives. The project team is evaluating a wide range of factors, which are included in the following ***Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)***:

- Automobile Accessibility
- Pedestrian Accessibility
- Bicycle Accessibility
- Transit Accessibility
- Safety
- Other Considerations

TABLE 3 - MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study
Measures of Effectiveness Evaluation

MOE Measures	Alternative 1 No build	Alternative 2 TSM/TDM	Alternative 3 Master Plan	Alternative 5	Alternative 5B	Cycle Track
1. Automobile Accessibility						
Determined using factors of travel time including vehicular delay	1	1	3	3	3	3
2. Pedestrian Accessibility						
Determined using factors of Pedestrian ***Level of Comfort***, presence of ***pedestrian refuge area***, crossing distance, and number of crossings	1	2	5	4	5	5
3. Bicycle Accessibility						
Determined using factors of Bicycle Level of Comfort and consistency with the Montgomery County Bike Master Plan and SHA bicycle standards	1	4	3	4	4	5
4. Transit Accessibility						
Determined using factors such as availability of queue jumps, opportunity for TSP, and on-street bus lanes	1	4	3	3	3	3
5. Safety						
Determined using factors of access points, conflict points, presence of a safety buffer, presence of a median, number of crosswalks, and 16th Street redesign.	1	2	4	5	5	5
6. Community Considerations						
Determined based on potential for aesthetic improvements	1	2	4	4	4	4
Determined based on number of displacements, impacts, and parking impacts	5	4	2	2	2	2

LEGEND

Designation:	Worst				Best
Color Code:	1	2	3	4	5

In **Table 3**, the alternatives are assigned a number between one (1) and five (5), with 1 being worst and 5 being best, to rank how well each alternative achieves the goals of each MOE relative to the other alternatives.

Other factors that are not part of the MOEs would include local residential and business traffic circulation and safety, as well as aesthetics and landscape and streetscape opportunities.

As part of this project, the Project Team will consider suggestions received from the public at the Location/Design Public Hearing; Stakeholder Group coordination; and comment cards, letters, and emails. Please use the enclosed comment card to provide your thoughts and suggestions on matters relating to the MOEs. Your comments will help ensure that proposed alternatives for the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study reflect the local community's character and aesthetic preferences.

Alternatives Retained For Detailed Study (ARDS)

(Please refer to the Mapping Packet inserted in this brochure.)

Having conducted the June 25, 2013 Alternatives Public Workshop and given careful consideration to public and agency comments, SHA made decisions about the alternatives/options that would or would not be carried forward for detailed analysis. The following alternatives and options were retained for detailed study:

Alternative 1: No-Build
The No-Build Alternative includes no major capital improvements. Minor short-term improvements would occur as a part of routine maintenance and safety operations. The No-Build Alternative does not address the purpose and need for the project. It serves as a baseline for comparing the impacts and benefits associated with the build alternatives.

Alternative 2: *Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)*
The TSM/TDM alternative would include improvements at existing signalized intersections such as Transit Signal Priority (TSP), queue jumps, and access consolidation. TSP allows approaching buses to send a signal to a transmitter at a signalized intersection to modify the signal timing and allow the buses to proceed through the signal without stopping. Queue jumps are short additional lanes for transit vehicles that can be combined with right-turn lanes and introduced at various intersections along the corridor. Queue jumps allow the transit buses at signalized intersections to move in front of the through traffic on a green light. Access consolidation increases safety and improves traffic flow by minimizing disruptions caused by turning vehicles by reducing the number of access points. Alternative 2 would also maintain the existing center reversible lane and include a 16-foot-wide outer travel lane in each direction to accommodate on-road bicyclists. Alternative 2 only partially addresses the purpose and need for the project; it would not eliminate the center reversible lane or address pedestrian mobility and safety concerns.

Alternative 3: Master Plan
The Master Plan Alternative is consistent with M-NCPPC's *North and West Silver Spring Master Plan*, adopted in 2000. Alternative 3 would consist of four travel lanes in the southbound direction at all times and a 16-foot-wide grass median that would replace the existing reversible center turn lane. Three travel lanes would be maintained in the northbound direction from 16th Street to Seminary Place, and the roadway would be widened to provide four northbound travel lanes from Seminary Place through Forest Glen Road. A 13.5-foot-wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue, and a new signal at Flora Lane would help bicyclists and pedestrians cross Georgia Avenue. Flora Lane would be shifted south to intersect Georgia Avenue opposite the driveway entrance to the shopping center. Left-turn lanes would be included on Georgia Avenue at the intersections with Forest Glen Road, Flora Lane, Seminary Place, and Seminary Road. To maintain consistency with M-NCPPC's *North and West Silver Spring Master Plan* for this portion of Georgia Avenue, bicycle accommodations would be limited to the existing bicyclist/pedestrian bridge and the local street network. Therefore, the Master Plan Alternative would not include on-road bicycle accommodations along Georgia Avenue through Montgomery Hills.

Alternative 5: Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
Alternative 5 would provide four lanes in the southbound direction with a 17-foot-wide center grass median. Three travel lanes would be maintained in the northbound direction from 16th Street to Seminary Place, and the roadway would be widened to provide four northbound travel lanes from Seminary Place through Forest Glen Road. In an effort to minimize right-of-way impacts, the ***centerline*** of the roadway would be shifted slightly near Columbia Boulevard to optimize available right-of-way in that area. Left-turn lanes would be provided on Georgia Avenue at Forest Glen Road and Seminary Road. The ramp to southbound 16th Street would be relocated to the signalized intersection with northbound 16th Street. Alternative 5 includes a 16-foot-wide outside travel lane to accommodate on-road bicycle use. A five-foot-wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue and would be set back from the curb by five feet where space allows.

Alternative 5 with Option B: Flora Lane Intersection
Alternative 5 with Option B includes the addition of a new traffic signal on Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane. Flora Lane would be shifted south to intersect Georgia Avenue opposite the driveway entrance to the shopping center. The new signalized intersection would accommodate left-turning movements onto Flora Lane and provide improved access for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists accessing Georgia Avenue and the Forest Glen Metrorail Station.

Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option
Alternative 5 with ***Cycle Track*** Option would provide a lane configuration similar to that of Alternative 5. However, with this option, a two-lane/two-way cycle track would be provided on the west side of Georgia Avenue that would extend from the existing bicycle/pedestrian bridge to the existing southbound16th Street ramp. The cycle track would include two, four-foot-wide bicycle lanes and a three-foot-wide buffer

that would separate vehicular traffic from bicycle traffic. From the southbound 16th Street ramp to the intersection with northbound 16th Street, on-road bicycle lanes would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue. The ramp to southbound 16th Street would be relocated to the signalized intersection with northbound 16th Street. A five-foot-wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue and would be set back from the curb by five feet where space allows.

Alternatives And Options No Longer Under Consideration

The following alternatives and options were dropped from further study:

Alternative 4: Three Lanes NB and SB
This alternative was dropped from further study because, although it would have fewer impacts than some of the other build alternatives, travel-lane capacity would be reduced from seven lanes (including the reversible center turn lane) to six (three lanes in each direction). This reduction would negatively affect traffic operations within the corridor and possibly on I-495.

Alternative 6: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
The ***Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)*** alternative was dropped from further study because the median ***busway*** would decrease the number of all-purpose travel lanes from seven to six and could negatively affect traffic operations along the corridor. The absence of dedicated left-turn lanes would make left turns difficult and limit access to surrounding businesses and neighborhoods. Alternative 6 allows minimal improvements in pedestrian/bicyclist access through the corridor and offers few options for aesthetics.

Alternative 7: Georgia Avenue Tunnel
The Georgia Avenue Tunnel was dropped from further study because the constructability concerns, increased displacements/impacts, and long-term maintenance costs associated with the alternative outweigh any traffic or aesthetic benefits derived from removing surface traffic from mainline Georgia Avenue in the Montgomery Hills Corridor. Other concerns include the tunnel's ability to accommodate a limited percentage of vehicles because of the close proximity of major traffic generators like the I-495 Interchange and 16th Street. During construction, ***maintenance of traffic (MOT)*** would be difficult and could reduce the number of travel lanes by three or four for an extended period of time. The close proximity of the Capital Beltway and its limited access would make suitable detours difficult, and the three-to-four-year construction period could adversely impact area businesses.

Intersection Option

Option A: Queue Jumps/Transit Signal Priority (Applicable to Alternatives 4 and 5)
Based on the detailed engineering conducted after the ARDS were selected, Alternative 5 Option A was dropped from consideration. The addition of the queue

jumps would result in several additional displacements, and the impacts are not justified when compared to the benefits of the improvement.

Environmental Summary

Detailed analyses were performed on the ARDS to identify potential impacts on natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources within the study area. A comparison of potential impacts for each alternative and option is included in **Table 4** (page 16).

Land Use

The Georgia Avenue corridor in Montgomery Hills is dominated by urban and suburban land uses and includes retail, office, commercial, and institutional space immediately adjacent to Georgia Avenue, with medium- to high-density residential communities located primarily behind the commercial uses adjacent to Georgia Avenue. The MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study includes an evaluation of the transportation improvements for Georgia Avenue that are included in M-NCPPC's North and West Silver Spring Master Plan.

The Maryland Smart Growth legislation was enacted to limit sprawl and direct state funding for growth-related projects toward county-designated ***Priority Funding Areas (PFAs)***. Priority Funding Areas (PFA) are geographic growth areas defined by State law and designated by local jurisdictions as targets for economic development. Because the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study area is located entirely within a designated PFA, the project is consistent with Maryland's ***Smart Growth Initiatives***.

Socioeconomic Resources

SHA owns approximately 100 feet of ***right-of-way*** along the Georgia Avenue corridor within the study limits. Additional right-of-way (parcels and buildings) along the corridor will be required to accommodate proposed additional roadway reconfigurations to address the project's purpose and need. The TSM/TDM and build alternatives would require up to 3.8 acres of right-of-way. Five business displacements would be associated with each build alternative, except for Alternative 2. Right-of-way impacts and displacements are provided in **Table 4**. No parks or recreational areas are located within the study area.

A review of census data has revealed the presence of minority and low-income populations within the project study area. In compliance with Executive Order 12898, Federal *Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations*, SHA will avoid disproportionately high and/or adverse effects on minority and/or low-income populations throughout the study area.

Outreach to ***Limited-English-Proficient (LEP)*** populations has included publishing advertisements for public meetings in Spanish-language newspapers, translating postcards and brochures for public meetings into Spanish,conducting door-to-door outreach along Georgia Avenue in advance of the June 25, 2013 Alternatives Public Workshop, and providing a Spanish-language interpreter at the workshop. Surveys of Montgomery Hills customers and business owners/

TABLE 4 – Summary of Environmental Impacts							
Resources		**Alternative 1: No- Build**	**Alternative 2: TSM/TDM**	**Alternative 3: Master Plan**	**Alternative 5**	**Alternative 5 with Option B**	**Alternative 5 with Cycle Track**
Relocations/Property	Residential Displacements	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Business Displacements	0	0	5	5	5	5
	Property Impacts	0	42	44	44	44	44
	Right-of-way Required (acres)	0	1.4	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.4
Natural Resources	Woodland/Forest Impacts (acres)	0	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7
	Hazardous Waste Sites (no.)	0	13	13	13	13	13
Cultural Resources	Historic Sites (no.)	0	0	1	1	1	1
	Archeological Sites (no.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 4(f) Resources	Name of Resource(s)	N/A	N/A	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church
	Resource Impact (acre)	N/A	N/A	0.26	0.24	0.27	0.24
Total cost (million $)		$0	$17-$24	$25 - $34	$30 - $40	$31 - $41	$33 - $43

*There will be no impacts on the following resources by any alternative: ***Rare, threatened or endangered species***; streams; ***100-year floodplain***; ***wetlands; prime farmland***; ***Chesapeake Bay Critical Area***

operators were also translated into Spanish. Further outreach and additional research of study-area demographic and economic characteristics will be completed as the study progresses.

Cultural Resources

The project is unlikely to impact any intact or potentially significant archeological resources. Two properties within the study area (Grace Episcopal Cemetery and Confederate Monument, and Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church) are eligible for listing in the ***National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)***. Alternatives 3 and 5 would require right-of-way from the Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church. On August 4, 2015, the ***Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)*** concurred that these alternatives would result in an adverse effect on the Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church. In accordance with ***23 CFR 774*** and ***49 USC 303***, SHA completed a Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation to assess the likely effects of the project on Calvary Lutheran Church and to evaluate options that avoid or minimize impacts on those resources caused by the build alternatives. The Section 4(f) Evaluation will determine whether feasible and prudent avoidance alternatives to the use of the Church property exist, and whether all possible planning to minimize harm to the resources has been performed. A copy of the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation will be available for review at the public hearing. Consistent with ***Section 106*** of the ***National Historic Preservation Act***, public comments are requested regarding effects on historic properties.

Natural Resources

A field investigation revealed that no streams or ***wetlands*** are located within the study area for this project. The study area is located entirely outside any ***100-year floodplains***. Up to 0.7 acre of trees will be impacted by the project. This project is not located within the ***Chesapeake Bay Critical Area***. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service have indicated that no state or federal ***rare, threatened, or endangered species*** are known to exist within the project area.

Hazardous Materials

SHA conducted an Initial Site Assessment for the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study area to identify locations with a likely presence of hazardous materials, wastes, or petroleum products. The assessment identified 109 sites within the study area that vary in the level of their potential environmental concern. A Preliminary Site Investigation Screening is recommended for 29 of the sites to gather additional information about potential contamination.

Air Quality and Noise Impacts

A project-level air quality analysis was conducted in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and FHWA guidelines. The purpose of this analysis was to evaluate the potential effects of the proposed alternatives on the air quality within the project area. The results of the analysis indicated that the project will not cause or contribute to a new violation of the ***National Ambient Air Quality Standards*** or increase the frequency or severity of an existing violation. SHA is currently conducting a detailed noise analysis for this project and

identified three ***Noise Sensitive Areas (NSA)*** for field monitoring. The full results of the analysis are pending and will be available at the public hearing on December 1, 2015.

Remaining Steps In The Project Planning Process

- Evaluate and address public hearing comments and coordinate with state and federal environmental review and regulatory agencies – Winter 2015/2016
- Identify the SHA Preferred Alternative – Winter 2015/2016
- Obtain Location/Design Approvals – Summer 2016

Non-Discrimination In Federally Assisted And State-Aid Programs

For information concerning non-discrimination in federally assisted and state-aid programs, please contact:

Ms. Wanda Dade, Director
Office of Equal Opportunity
Maryland State Highway Administration
707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop M-LL3
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Telephone: (410) 545-0327
Toll-free in Maryland: 1-888-545-0098
Email: wdade@sha.state.md.us

Right-Of-Way And Relocation Assistance

The proposed project may require additional right-of-way. Residential and commercial relocations may also be required. For information regarding right-of-way acquisition and relocation assistance, please contact:

Mr. Robert Hammond-Bey
District 3, Office of Real Estate
Maryland State Highway Administration
9300 Kenilworth Avenue
Greenbelt, MD 20770
Telephone: (301) 513-7461
Toll-free in Maryland: 1-800-749-0737
Email: rhammondbey@sha.state.md.us

Public Involvement

SHA and Montgomery County will maintain public involvement throughout the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study. Agency and County representatives are available to meet with community groups, civic associations, and other organizations. To request a meeting, please contact Mr. Jeremy Beck, Project Manager, using the information provided inside the front cover of the brochure.

SHA will provide a telephonic interpreter for those who need assistance with the English language. A Spanish-language interpreter will be available during the Location/Design Public Hearing. For a Spanish-language copy of this brochure, please contact Mr. Beck at (410) 545-8518/toll-free 1-800-548-5026, use the QR Code to access the translated brochure online, or go to: **www.roads.maryland.gov**, and click on **Projects**; **SHA Projects Page**; **Montgomery County; MD 97, Georgia Ave. 16th Street to Forest Glen Road**.

SI DESEA UNA COPIA DE ESTE VOLANTE EN ESPAÑOL, POR FAVOR CONTACTARSE CON EL SR. JEREMY BECK, GERENTE DE PROYECTO, LLAMANDO AL 410-545-8518 (GRATIS AL 1-800-548-5026), utilice este código QR para acceder vía internet una copia traducida del volante, o visite nuestro sitio web en: www.roads.maryland.gov, y haga clic en Projects; SHA Projects Page; Montgomery County; MD 97, Georgia Ave. 16th Street to Forest Glen Road.

The Maryland Relay Service can assist teletype users at 7-1-1.

Media Used For Meeting Notification

An advertisement appeared in the following newspapers to announce this Location/Design Public Hearing:

- Washington Post
- Afro American
- Montgomery Sentinel
- El Tiempo Latino

Your Opinion Matters

This hearing offers members of the public the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and concerns about the project and to provide spoken and written comments. We will carefully review and consider project concerns and preferences expressed at the hearing. To assist you in providing comments, we have included in this brochure a postage-paid mailer and the contact information for members of the Project Planning Team.

Questions or comments following the workshop may be addressed to any of the Project Team members listed inside the front cover of the brochure.

Documents Available For Review

The Location/Design Public Hearing transcript will be available for review approximately eight weeks after the hearing during normal business hours at the locations listed below. To confirm availability, please call ahead at:

Silver Spring Library
900 Wayne Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Telephone: (240) 773-9420

SHA District 3 Office
9300 Kenilworth Avenue
Greenbelt, MD 20770
Telephone: (301) 513-7300
Toll-free within Maryland: (800) 749-0737

SHA Project Management Division
707 North Calvert Street, 3rd Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202
Telephone: (410) 545-2874
Toll-free within Maryland: (800) 548-5026

Thank You

Thank you for participating in the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study Location/Design Public Hearing. Your comments are greatly appreciated!

For more information about this project and others, visit our internet site at **www.roads.maryland.gov**. Click on **Projects**, **SHA Project Page**, **Montgomery County**, or use the QR Code provided here:

511 Know before you go!

Glossary

Abatement (noise): The effective reduction of the existing or predicted noise levels resulting from highway traffic. In general, the noise barrier is the primary abatement measure used to reduce highway traffic noise levels.

Aesthetics: Beauty or attractiveness and people's responses to it.

Alternatives: Potential solutions that are evaluated to determine whether they will address the purpose and need of the project.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (as it relates to sidewalks): Sidewalks are considered ADA compliant when they maintain the following characteristics: minimum width of 60 inches; maximum 2 percent cross slope; and ramps perpendicular to the curb.

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT): The average number of vehicles that pass a given location on a roadway during a 24-hour period.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A high-performance bus service that combines bus lanes with high-quality bus stations, vehicles, and other enhancements to achieve the performance and quality of a light rail or metro system with the flexibility, cost, and simplicity of a bus system.

Busway: A section of roadway reserved exclusively for buses. Also known as a "bus lane."

Centerline: The point at which a roadway is divided in half. The center of the right-of-way of any transportation corridor upon which engineering measurements are initially made.

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area: All waters and lands under the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, as well as all land within 1,000 feet of tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay.

Cycle Track: An exclusive bicycle facility that combines the user experience of a separated path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bicycle lane. A cycle track is physically separated from motorized traffic and distinct from the sidewalk.

Delay: A measure of the average time (in seconds) required for a vehicle to pass through an intersection.

Displacement: A building that must be removed to complete a construction project.

Floodplain (100-Year Floodplain): The flat or nearly flat land along a river or stream in tidal areas that is covered by water during a flood. A 100-year flood has a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

Level of Comfort (LOC): Based on roadway design and features, LOC measures the sense of safety experienced by pedestrians and bicyclists as they travel on or along a roadway. LOC ranges from A to F.

Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) Population: Persons who are unable to communicate effectively in English because their primary language is not English. A person with Limited English Proficiency may have difficulty speaking and/or reading English or may be unable to read or communicate in English at all.

Location and Design Approvals: The formal approvals by the Federal Highway Administration (Location) and the State Highway Administration (Design) indicating that National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements have been satisfied, and that both agencies concur with the selected alternative. This makes the selected alternative eligible to advance.

Maintenance of Traffic (MOT): Changes to normal traffic flow, including planned detours and alternate routes to closed roads. MOT is most often implemented during roadway construction.

Maryland Historical Trust (MHT): An agency of the Maryland Department of Planning that assists with research, conservation, and education about Maryland's historical and cultural heritage.

Measures of Effectiveness (MOE): An assessment tool used to evaluate and compare proposed roadway improvements, including vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle accessibility; safety; and quality-of-life improvements.

Median: The area that divides traffic moving in opposite directions on a single roadway.

National Historic Preservation Act: Legislation intended to preserve historical and archeological sites in the United States. The 1966 act created the National Register of Historic Places.

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): The official list of the nation's historic places that are worthy of preservation. Authorized by the national Historic Preservation Act, the NRHP is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

Noise-Sensitive Area (NSA): An area that, because of its use by humans or certain wildlife species and the importance of reduced noise levels to such use, is designated for management that limits the noise level from long-term and/or continuous noise-producing sources. Examples of land uses that could be included in NSAs are residences, schools, day care centers, and places of worship.

Pedestrian Refuge Area: A section of pavement or sidewalk within an intersection or between lanes of traffic where pedestrians may safely wait to cross a street.

Prime Farmland: A designation assigned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture defining land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is also available for these land uses.

Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species (RTE): In Maryland: Plant and animal species that are listed on or are candidates for listing on the Federal Endangered Species List and additional species that are considered rare by the Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Service.

Right-of-Way: Land or property (often in a strip) required for transportation purposes, such as roadway widening or improvements.

Section 4(f): Enacted as a portion of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f) requires that the proposed use of land from a publicly owned public park, recreation area, wildlife and/or waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site, as part of a federally funded or approved transportation project, is permissible only if there is no feasible and prudent alternative to that use.

Section 106 Procedures of the National Historic Preservation Act: Derived from Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which governs the identification, evaluation, and protection of historical and archaeological resources affected by state and federal transportation projects. Principal areas include the presence or absence of sites, their eligibility based on National Register of Historic Places criteria, and the significance and effect of a proposed project upon such sites.

Sense of Place: The qualities of a community that create its unique character.

Smart Growth Initiatives: The general goals of Maryland's 1997 Smart Growth Initiative are to enhance the state's existing communities and other locally designated growth areas; identify and protect the state's most valuable farmland and other natural resources; and save taxpayers from the cost of building new infrastructure to support poorly planned development. Smart Growth concentrates new development and redevelopment in areas that have existing or planned infrastructure in order to avoid sprawl.

Stakeholder Group: A cross-section of members of the impacted community--local residents, local government, and area business owners/operators--who discuss goals, concerns, and community preferences for the project. The Stakeholder Group meets periodically with SHA during the decision-making process to arrive at a selected alternative that meets the needs and preferences of the community as much as possible, within the constraints of the project. Stakeholder Group members serve as "go-betweens" who share the comments and concerns of residents and business-owners with SHA and inform the community of project issues and developments.

State and National Ambient Air-Quality Standards: The Clean Air Act, which was last amended in 1990, requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for wide-spread pollutants from sources considered harmful to public health and the environment.

Streetscape: Urban roadway design and conditions as they impact street users and nearby residents. Streetscaping recognizes that streets are places where people engage in various activities, including but not limited to motor vehicle travel. Streetscapes help define a community's aesthetic quality, identity, economic activity, health, social cohesion, and opportunity. Streetscape features, such as street lights, trees and landscaping, and street furniture can contribute to the unique character of a block or an entire neighborhood.

Transcript: The official word-for-word written copy of all spoken and/or written testimony presented during the formal portion of SHA's public hearings. The transcript is provided by a contracted court reporter and becomes available for public review eight weeks after the hearing concludes.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Actions that reduce peak-period and/or overall traffic congestion. Examples of TDM include high-occupancy vehicles, cycling, and walking.

Transportation Systems Management (TSM): A transportation alternative that consists of spot improvements and access management to address short-term safety, operational, and public concerns at specific locations along a roadway. TSM improvements generally seek to reduce traffic congestion without significantly altering the existing roadway.

Wetlands: Areas that are regularly wet or flooded, with vegetation adapted for life under those soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, bogs, marshes, and similar areas.

23 CFR 774: FHWA implementing regulations for Section 4(f).

49 USC 303: Section of the US Department of Transportation Act that includes Section 4(f).

Notes

Notes

Notes

Maryland Department of Transportation
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
707 North Calvert Street
Mail Stop C-301
Baltimore, MD 21202

Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

Pete K. Rahn
Secretary

Gregory C. Johnson, P.E
Administrator

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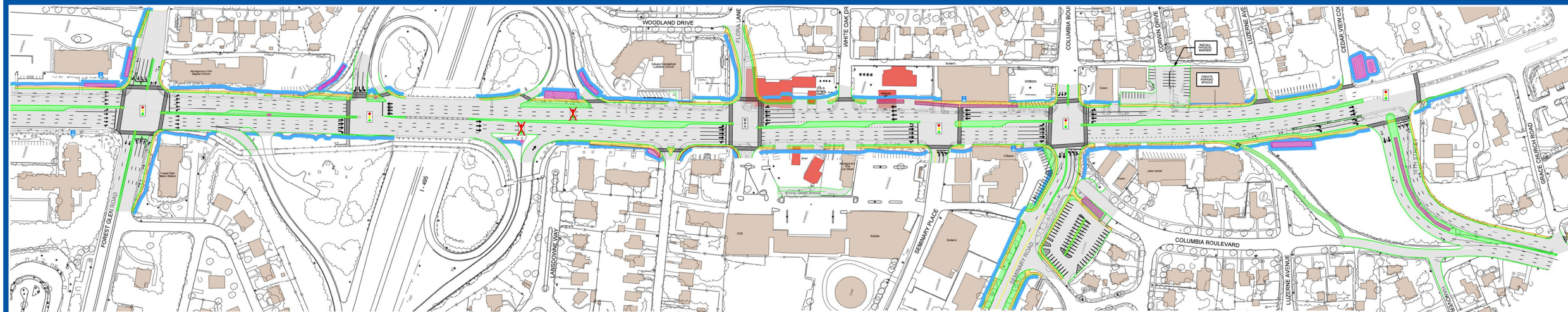
MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

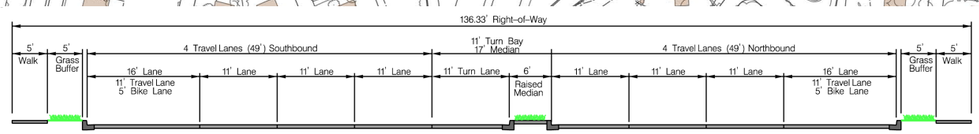
MAPPING PACKET

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

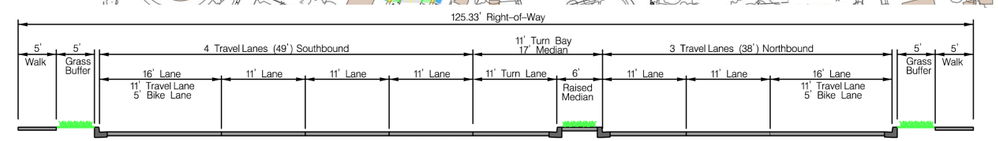
NOVEMBER 2015

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Alternative 5B - with Flora Ln Intersection



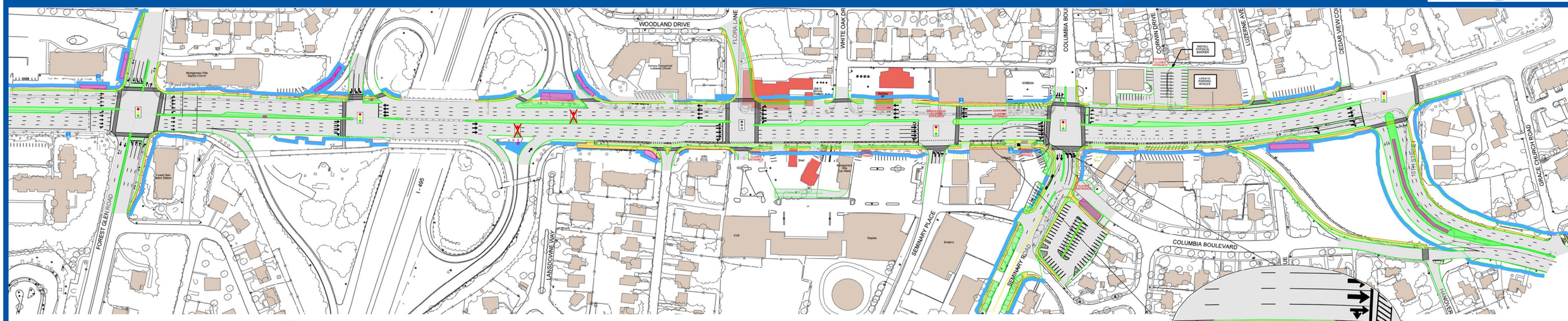


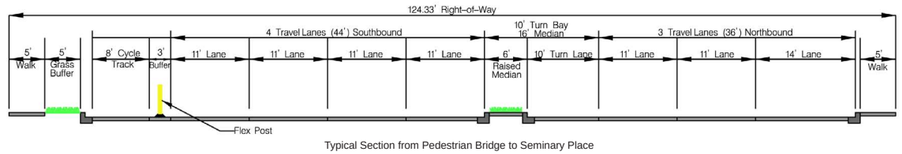
Typical Section from Forest Glen Road to Seminary Place



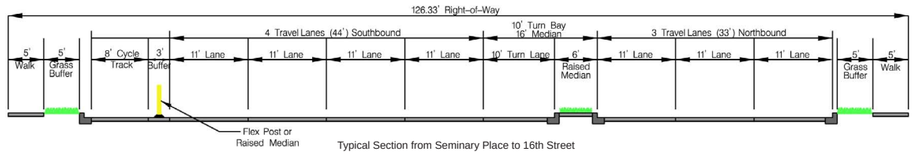
Typical Section from Seminary Place to 16th Street

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Alternative 5 - Cycle Track

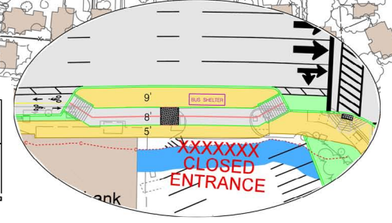




Typical Section from Pedestrian Bridge to Seminary Place



Typical Section from Seminary Place to 16th Street



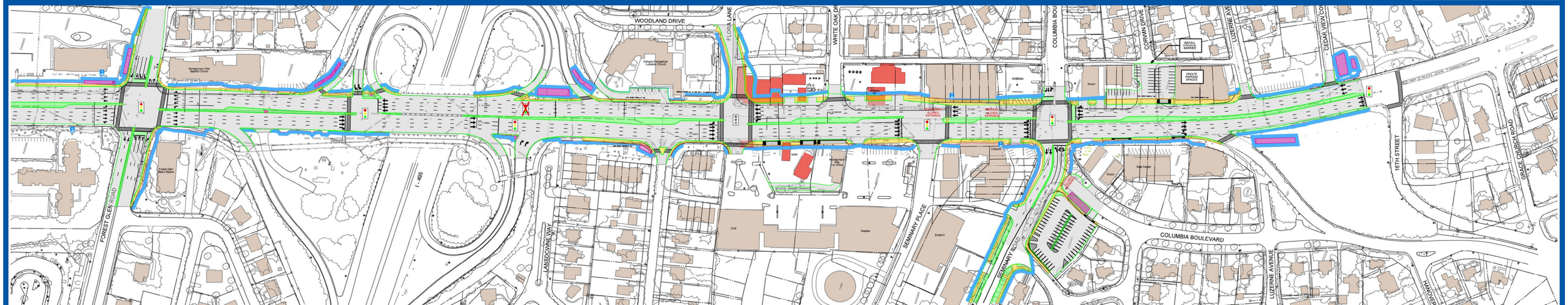
LEGEND

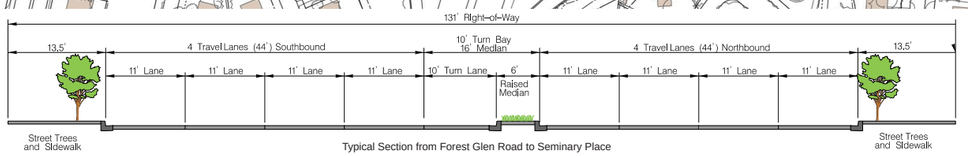
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Proposed Median/Buffer
- Proposed Roadway
- Cut/Fill Boundary
- Displacements
- Bike Box/Thru Pocket Shading
- Proposed Driveway
- LOD Buffer
- Existing Signal Location
- Potential Signal Location
- Signal To Be Removed
- Stormwater Management Feature

NOT TO SCALE

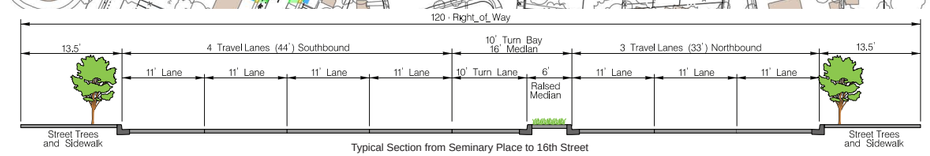
REVISED NOVEMBER 2015

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Alternative 3 - Master Plan



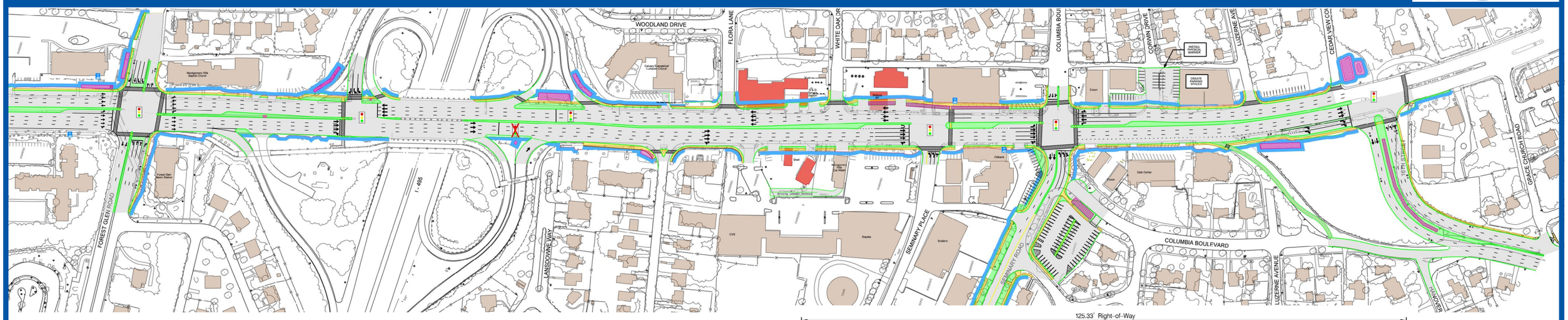


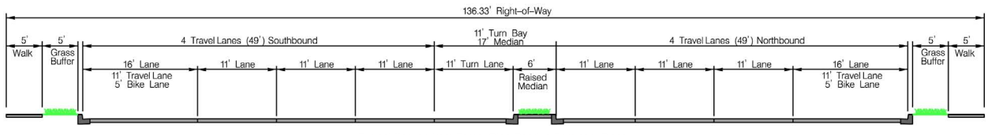
Typical Section from Forest Glen Road to Seminary Place



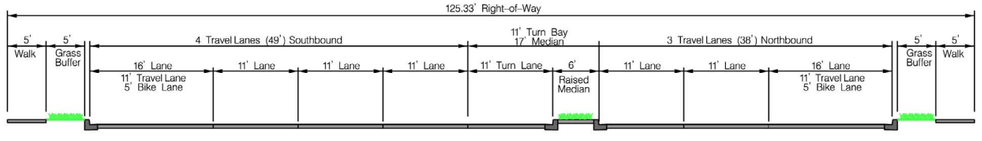
Typical Section from Seminary Place to 16th Street

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Alternative 5





Typical Section from Forest Glen Road to Seminary Place



Typical Section from Seminary Place to 16th Street

LEGEND

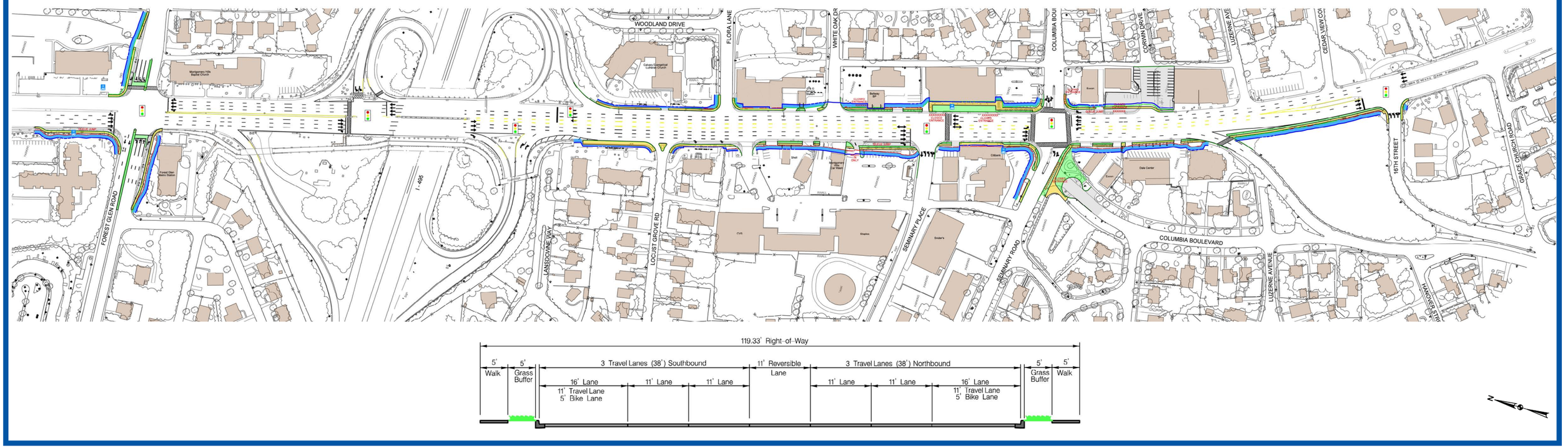
- Proposed Sidewalk
- Proposed Median/Buffer
- Proposed Roadway
- Cut/Fill Boundary
- Displacements
- Bike Box/Thru Pocket Shading
- Proposed Driveway
- LOD Buffer
- Existing Signal Location
- Potential Signal Location
- Signal To Be Removed
- Stormwater Management Feature

NOT TO SCALE

REVISED NOVEMBER 2015

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Alternative 1 - No Build

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Alternative 2 - TSM / TDM



LEGEND

- Proposed Sidewalk
- Proposed Median/Buffer
- Proposed Roadway
- Cut/Fill Boundary
- Displacements
- Bike Box/Thru Pocket Shading
- Proposed Driveway
- LOD Buffer
- Existing Signal Location
- Potential Signal Location
- Signal To Be Removed
- Stormwater Management Feature

NOT TO SCALE

REVISED NOVEMBER 2015

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____ **DATE** _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

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ATTN: JEREMY BECK
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING
MD STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
707 N CALVERT STREET MS C-301
BALTIMORE MARYLAND 21298-6521

FOLD FOLD FOLD

Help Us Improve

To help us improve our public involvement program, we would appreciate your thoughts on this project brochure.

Please circle the most appropriate number.	Poor			Excellent
Overall, was the brochure useful and informative?	1	2	3	4
Was each part of the brochure easy to understand?				
Purpose of the Study	1	2	3	4
Purpose of the Hearing	1	2	3	4
How to Comment on the Study	1	2	3	4
Project Status	1	2	3	4
Project History	1	2	3	4
Project Need	1	2	3	4
Description of Alternatives	1	2	3	4
Maps of Alternatives	1	2	3	4
Tables and Charts	1	2	3	4
Environmental Summary	1	2	3	4
Remaining Steps in Planning Process	1	2	3	4

*Which part of the brochure was most valuable?*_____

*Which part of the brochure was least valuable?*_____

*How can we improve the brochure?*_____

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. Please return it to us by mail or bring it with you to the hearing.

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study - Project No. MO224M11

DISPLAY BOARDS
&
WALL MAPS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS

PROJECT PLANNING STUDY

MARYLAND
97

WELCOME

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY

Location/Design Public Hearing

Montgomery Blair High School
51 University Boulevard East
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

6:00 p.m. – Open House	7:00 p.m. - Public Hearing
Maps and displays for review Staff available for questions	30 minute presentation Public Testimony

HEARING OBJECTIVES

- Provide updates on the progress of the Study
- Present alternatives under consideration
- Present results of detailed engineering/environmental studies
- Present the next steps
- Receive feedback

MARYLAND 97

MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES

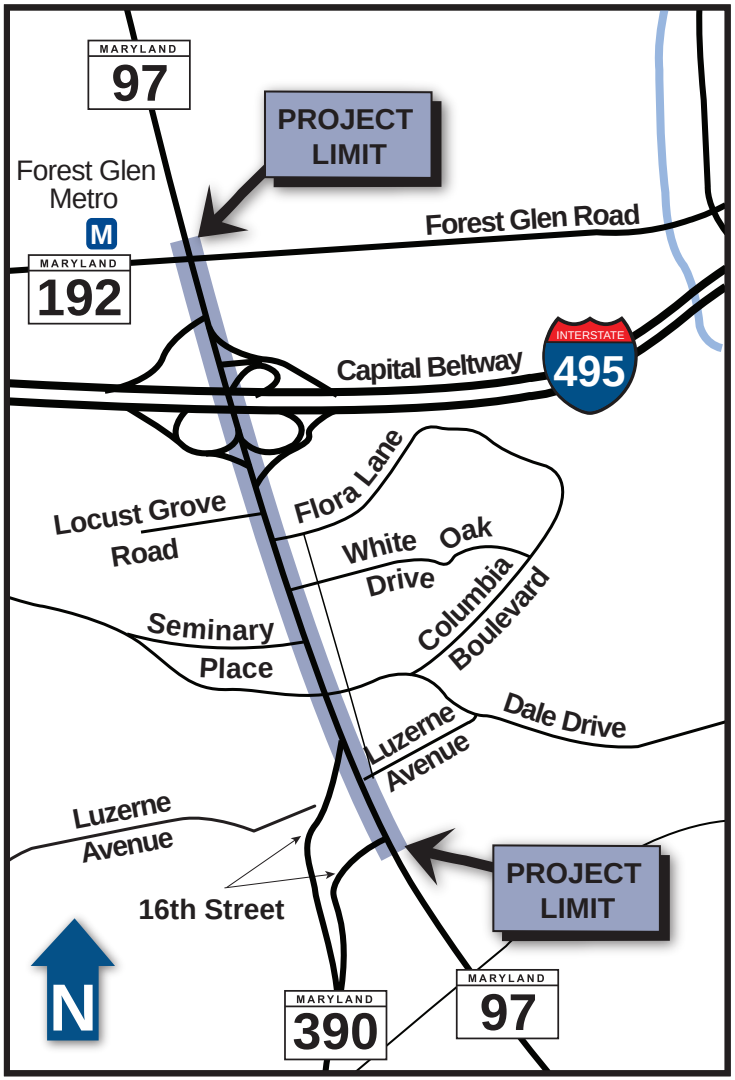
PUBLIC TESTIMONY

- **Speakers for public testimony will be called in the order they registered. You may add your name to the Speakers List at the registration table**
- **The Project Team will receive statements only - no questions will be addressed from the floor. Staff members are available to answer questions in the open house area.**
- **If a large number of people enroll, a time limit of three minutes for each speaker may be necessary to ensure that everyone can be heard**
- **Please begin your testimony by spelling your name, and providing your address and organization name, if you are representing one**
- **Please speak into the microphone. Testimony will be taped and transcribed for a hearing transcript**

OTHER WAYS TO COMMENT

- **Individuals may speak privately to a court reporter outside of the auditorium to provide testimony or to add to their public testimony**
- **Written statements and comment card submissions are also welcomed and must be received by December 31, 2015 for inclusion in the hearing transcript**
- **Public, private and written testimony will be considered equally in project considerations**

PROJECT LOCATION



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Planning*

Design*

Right-of-Way Acquisition*

Construction*

**Each phase is funded separately in the Consolidated Transportation Program*

Initiation & Scoping Process

- Develop Purpose and Need Statement
- Conduct preliminary environmental inventory
- Develop Preliminary Alternatives
- Conduct travel demand analysis

Alternatives Public Workshop

- Evaluate comments from public and regulatory agencies
- Select alternatives for detailed study
- Develop Detailed Alternatives
- Perform detailed environmental analysis
- Prepare draft environmental document

Location/Design Public Hearing

- Evaluate comments from public and regulatory agencies
- Perform additional studies, if necessary
- Prepare final environmental document
- Select Preferred Alternative

Obtain Location & Design Approvals

- Public Involvement
- Agency Coordination

SHA State Highway Administration
Driven to Excel
Maryland Department of Transportation

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public Meetings

- Informational Workshop February 2012
- Alternatives Public Workshop June 2013

Stakeholder Group

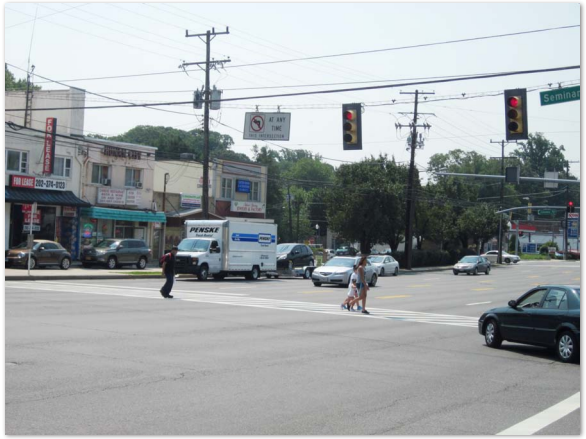
- Stakeholder Group has met seven times
- Includes 18 representatives of civic associations, faith communities, Holy Cross Hospital, area businesses, bicycle proponents, Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, commuters, residents, transit users, and other members recommended by local elected officials

Meetings with Community Associations, Businesses, Property Owners as requested

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ROADWAY

- 3 lanes northbound, 3 lanes southbound, 1 reversible center lane (no physical median) between I-495 and 16th Street
- Visual clutter with light poles and signs
- Commercial corridor with multiple access points
- Left-turns prohibited during peak travel periods



TRANSIT SERVICES

- Metrobus
- Ride-on bus
- Metrorail

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES

- Sidewalks not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards
- Limited crosswalks
- No on-road bicycle accommodations
- Pedestrian bridge crosses I-495

PROJECT PURPOSE

To establish a balanced approach to transportation within the MD 97 corridor that:

- **Evaluates vehicular, pedestrian and bicyclist mobility and safety**
- **Accommodates proposed transit enhancements**
- **Establishes a sense of place within the Montgomery Hills community**

PROJECT NEEDS

Improved Vehicular Circulation

- The Montgomery Hills section of MD 97 carries more vehicular traffic than any other non-interstate road in Montgomery County. Access to side streets and local businesses along the corridor is difficult.

Unobstructed Pedestrian Access

- Sidewalks along this corridor are generally non-compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Signs and utility poles on sidewalks in both directions along MD 97 present numerous reduced-width areas and obstacles for wheelchair accessibility.

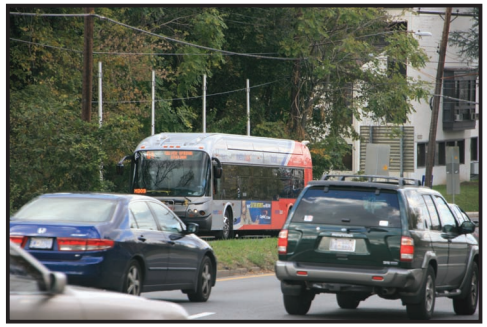
PROJECT NEEDS

Designated Bicycle Access

- The lack of dedicated bicycle lanes and road-sharing signage or markings makes it difficult for bicyclists to travel through the area. Heavy traffic volumes and the lack of shoulders create conditions that discourage bicycle use.

Improved Transit Accessibility

- Transit accessibility within the study corridor is impeded by the high levels of traffic congestion along MD 97 and the lack of adequate pedestrian/bicyclist connectivity throughout the study area.



PROJECT NEEDS

Improved Safety

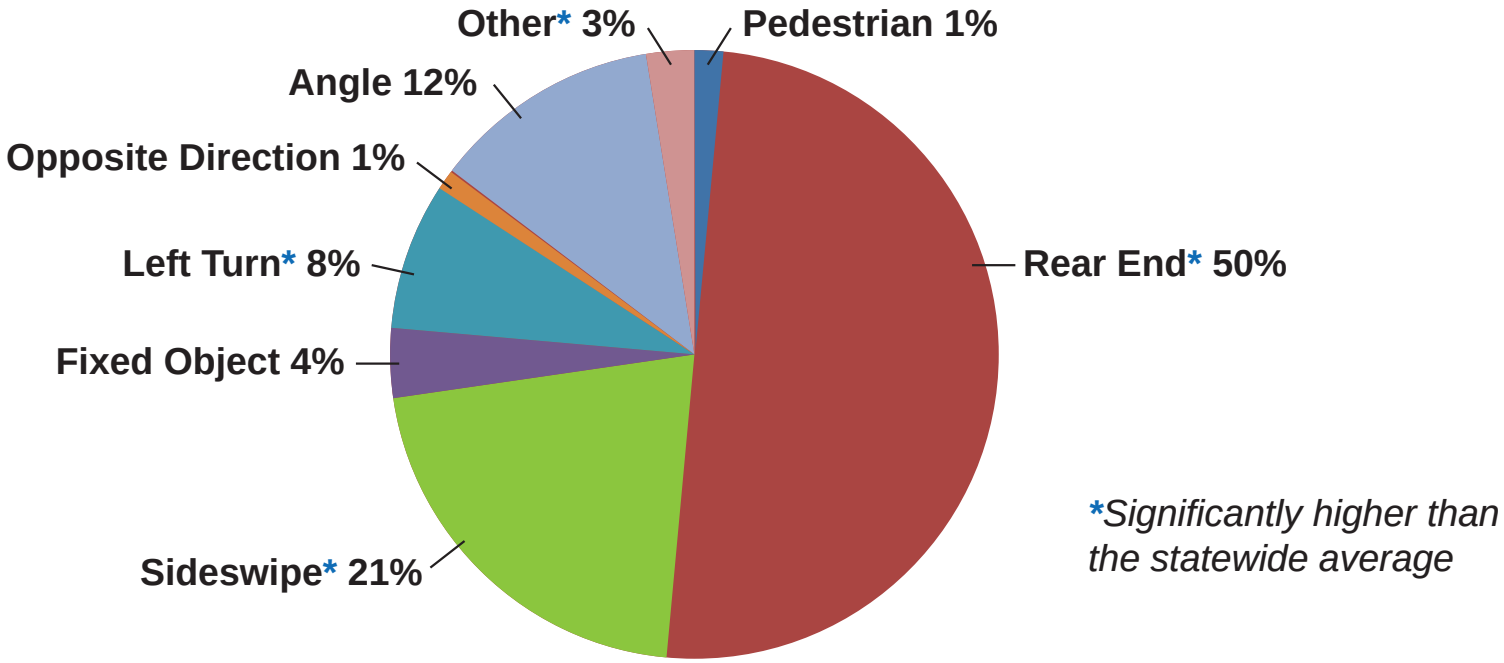
- 297 police-reported crashes occurred from 2012 through 2014. Approximately 94 of those crashes (32 percent) resulted in injuries; none were fatal.

Established Sense of Place

- Existing conditions create a disorienting environment for motorists, especially for those exiting and entering I-495. For motorists unfamiliar with the corridor, the reversible lane, cluttered signage, and unclear lane markings may create confusion.

SAFETY SUMMARY

MD 97 Crashes 2012 - 2014



*Significantly higher than the statewide average

- 297 police-reported crashes occurred within the study limits between 2012-2014
- 94 of those crashes (32 percent) resulted in injuries
- Rear-end, sideswipe, and left-turn crashes each occurred at a rate significantly higher than the statewide average for those types of crashes on similar roadways.

TRAFFIC

2011 Existing and 2040 Projected Average Daily Traffic

Georgia Avenue Segment	Average Daily Traffic (vehicles per day)		
	2011 Existing	2040 Projected	Percent Growth
North of Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	65,000	75,000	15.3%
Forest Glen Road to I-495	73,000	84,000	15.1%
I-495 to Seminary Place	81,000	93,000	14.8%
Seminary Place to Seminary Road/ Columbia Boulevard	71,000	82,000	15.5%
Seminary Road to Southbound 16th Street	66,000	76,000	15.2%
Southbound 16th Street to Northbound 16th Street	51,000	59,000	15.7%
South of 16th Street	35,000	41,000	17.1%

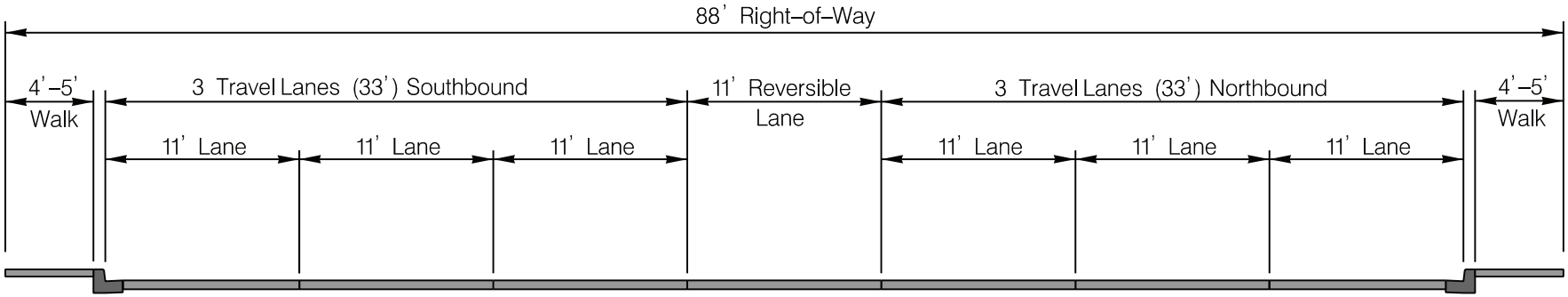
ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVES CURRENTLY UNDER STUDY
Alternative 1: **No-Build***
Alternative 2: **Transportation System Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM)***
Alternative 3: **Master Plan***
Alternative 5: **4 Lanes Southbound and 3 Lanes Northbound***
Alternative 5 with Option B: **Flora Lane Intersection Improvements***
Alternative 5 with Cycle Track **(added during detailed study period)**
ALTERNATIVES DROPPED FROM CONSIDERATION
Alternative 4: **3 Lanes Northbound and 3 Lanes Southbound****
Alternative 5 with Option A: **Transit Queue Jumps/Transit Signal Priority*(dropped during detailed study period)**
Alternative 6: **Bus Rapid Transit****
Alternative 7: **Georgia Avenue Tunnel****

***Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS), selected December 2013**

****Preliminary Alternatives dropped following a determination they were impractical or unfeasible**

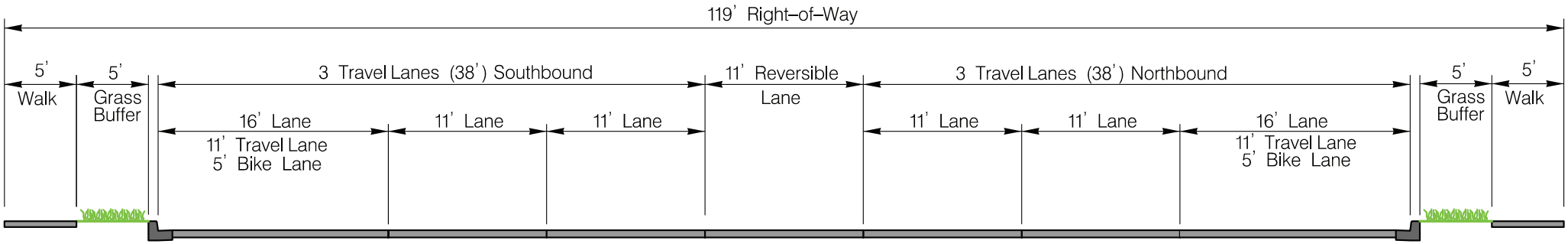
ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-BUILD



- **No major improvements**
- **No change in traffic flow**
- **No displacements**
- **Costs limited to normal maintenance**
- **Provides baseline for comparison to other alternatives**

ALTERNATIVE 2:

Transportation Systems Management (TSM) – Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

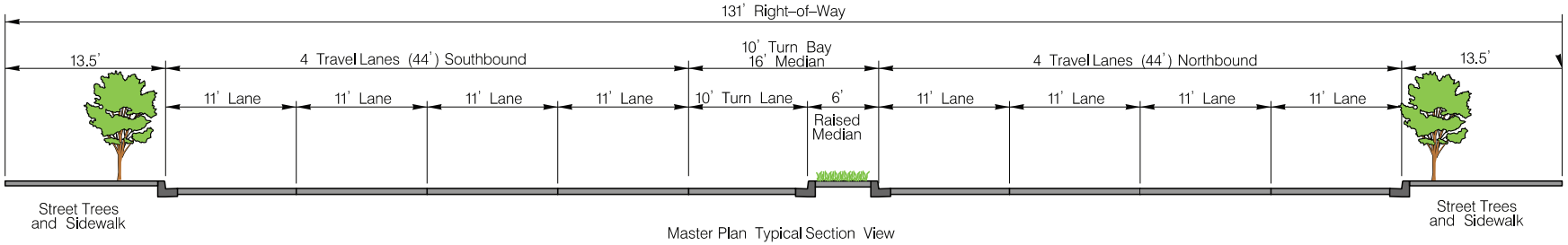


TSM–TDM Typical Section

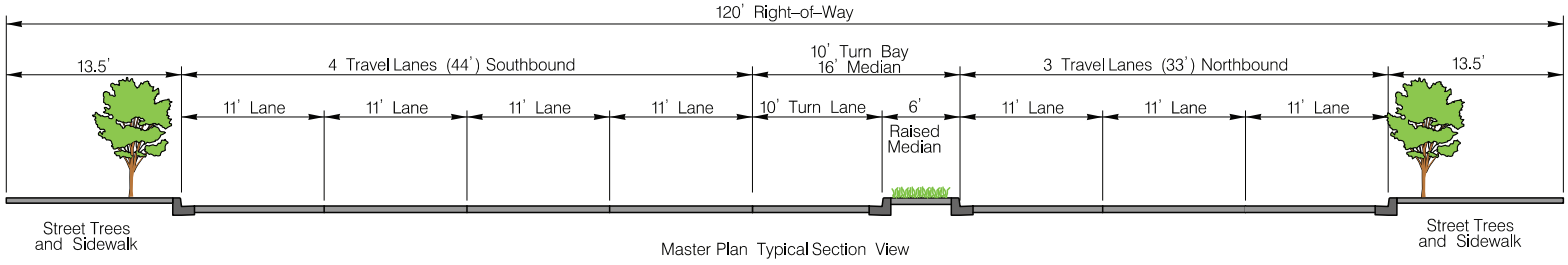
ROADWAY/TRANSIT FEATURES	PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES
• Transit Signal Priority (TSP) – **Alters signal timing to allow buses to more easily pass through intersection without stopping** • Queue jumps – **Short additional lanes that allow approaching buses at signalized intersections to move to the front of through traffic on a green light** • Access consolidation – **Reducing the number of access points to reduce conflicts with turning vehicles**	• **Sidewalks compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards on both sides of Georgia Avenue, with grass buffer where space allows** • **Wide outside lanes accommodate on-road bicycle use**

ALTERNATIVE 3: MASTER PLAN

Four Southbound Travel Lanes/ Four Northbound Travel Lanes (Seminary Place through Forest Glen Road)



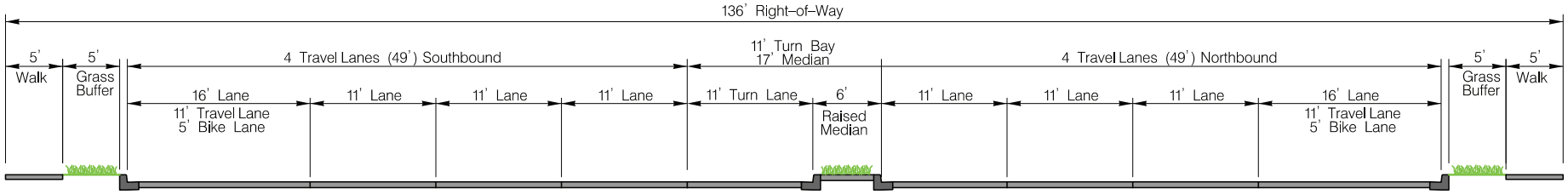
Four Southbound Travel Lanes/Three Northbound Travel Lanes (16th Street to Seminary Place)



ROADWAY FEATURES	PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES
• Raised median with left turn lanes • Columbia Boulevard closed at Seminary Road intersection • Corwin Drive closed to create additional parking • Potential new traffic signal at Flora Lane • Realigned Seminary Road at Georgia Avenue	• Wide sidewalks compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards on both sides of Georgia Avenue • Median refuge area at crosswalks • On-road bicycles directed to county road network

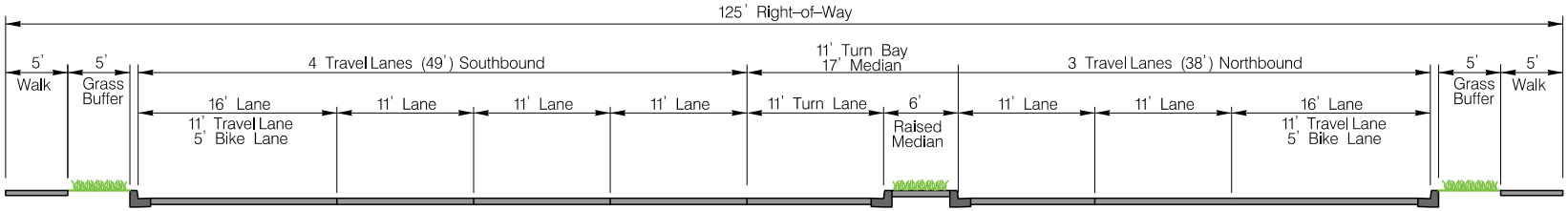
ALTERNATIVE 5

Four Southbound Travel Lanes/Four Northbound Travel Lanes (Seminary Place through Forest Glen Road)



4 Northbound /4 Southbound Typical Section

Four Southbound Travel Lanes/Three Northbound Travel Lanes (16th Street to Seminary Place)



3 Northbound /4 Southbound Typical Section

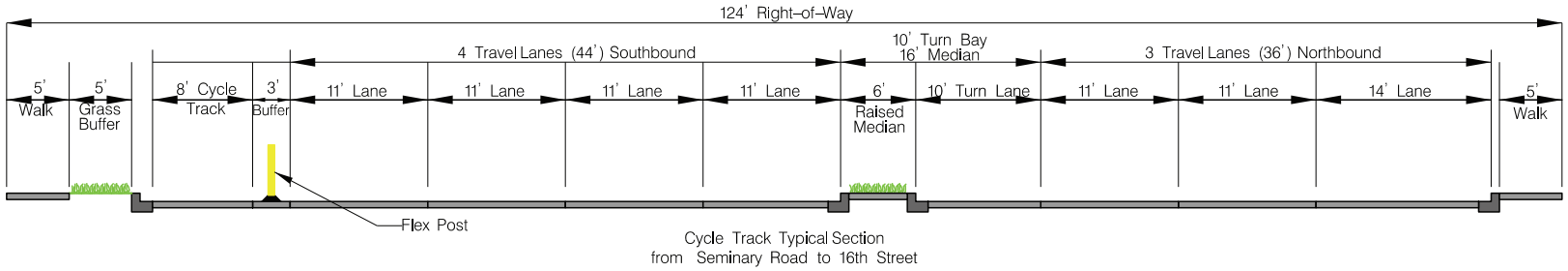
ROADWAY FEATURES	PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FACILITIES
• **Raised median with left turn lanes** • **Columbia Boulevard closed at Seminary Road intersection** • **Southbound 16th Street ramp relocated to signalized intersection with northbound 16th Street**	• **Sidewalks compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards on both sides of Georgia Avenue, with grass buffer where space allows** • **Median refuge area at crosswalks** • **Wide outside lanes accommodate on-road bicycle use** • **Closed Southbound 16th Street ramp becomes bicycle/pedestrian path**

ALTERNATIVE 5 WITH OPTION B:
Flora Lane Intersection Improvements

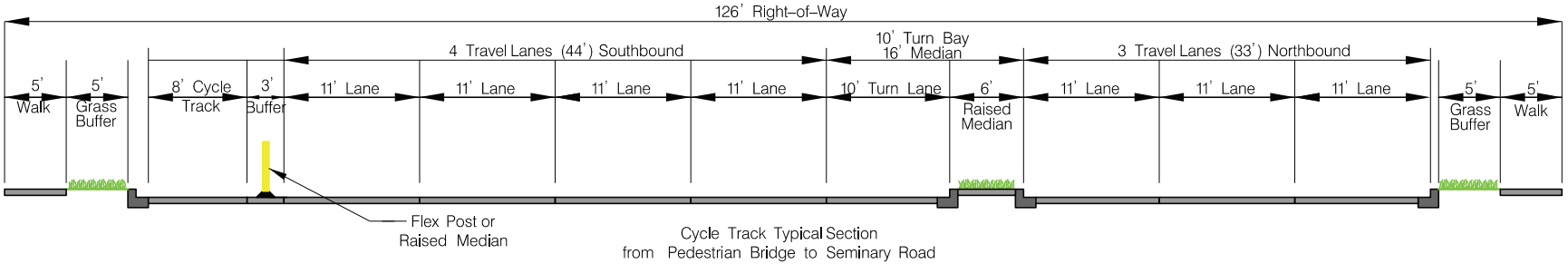
- **Potential new traffic signal on Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane**
- **Flora Lane would be shifted south to intersect with the existing shopping center entrance**
- **Left-turns would be permitted onto Flora Lane**
- **Intersection would include pedestrian crosswalks**

ALTERNATIVE 5 – WITH CYCLE TRACK

Four Southbound Travel Lanes/Three Northbound Travel Lanes (16th Street to Seminary Place)



Four Southbound Travel Lanes/Four Northbound Travel Lanes (Seminary Place to Pedestrian Bridge)



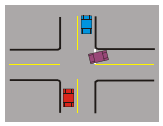
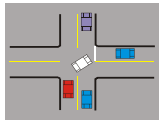
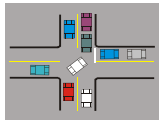
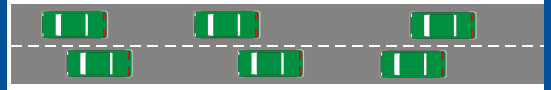
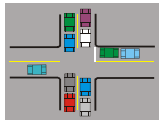
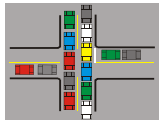
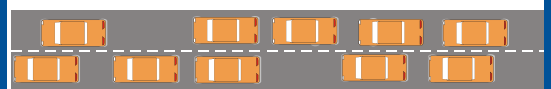
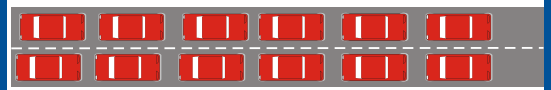
FEATURES

- **Two-way cycle track would be located on the west side of Georgia Avenue from pedestrian bridge to southbound 16th Street ramp**
- **Bicycle traffic separated from motorized traffic with three-foot-wide buffer**
- **Bicycle lanes would be four-foot-wide in each direction**
- **At southbound 16th Street ramp, the cycle track ends and on-road bicycle lanes would be provided on both sides of Georgia Avenue to the intersection with northbound 16th Street**

What is Level of Service (LOS)?

Level of Service is a quantitative measure of traffic operational conditions. Ranges of operation are defined for each type of roadway section (signalized intersections, freeways, ramp junctions and weaving sections) and are related to the amount of traffic demand at a given time as compared to the capacity of that type of roadway section.

Six levels of service are defined for each type of roadway section and are given letter designations from A to F, with A representing good operating conditions and F representing unsatisfactory operating conditions.

Intersection			Roadway	
• Highly stable, free-flow condition with little or no congestion • Delay: <10 seconds/vehicle		LOS A		• Free flowing • Uninterrupted vehicle
• Stable, free-flow condition with little congestion • Delay: 10 to 20 seconds/vehicle		LOS B		• Stable flow • Other vehicles are more noticeable
• Free-flow condition with moderate congestion • Delay: 20 to 35 seconds/vehicle		LOS C		• Stable flow • Vehicle operations affected by other vehicles
• Approaching unstable condition with increasing congestion • Delay: 35 to 55 seconds/vehicle		LOS D		• High density free flow • Operation of vehicle is affected by other vehicles
• Unstable, congested condition • Delay: 55 to 80 seconds/vehicle		LOS E		• High density traffic flow, nearing capacity • Operating conditions are extremely poor
• Stop and go • Delay: >80 seconds/vehicle		LOS F		• Forced or breakdown flow • Amount of traffic exceeds capacity

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Overview of 2011 Existing and 2040 Traffic

Signal Intersection LOS	Existing Conditions (2011)				Alternative 1: No-Build (2040)				Alternative 2: TSM/TDM (2040)				Alternative 3: Master Plan (2040)				Alternative 5: Four Lanes Southbound; Three to Four Lanes Northbound (2040)				Alternative 5, Option B: Flora Lane Intersection (2040)				Alternative 5 Cycle Track Option (2040)			
	AM		PM		AM		PM		AM		PM		AM		PM		AM		PM		AM		PM		AM		PM	
	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)
Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	D	48	C	32	E	66	C	32	F	133	D	41	F	81	E	79	D	52	D	42	E	64	D	51	E	64	D	51
I-495 Outer Loop Ramps	B	14	B	16	B	16	B	16	D	53	C	27	C	22	F	87	B	11	C	21	C	25	B	19	C	25	B	19
I-495 Inner Loop Ramps	C	34	A	8	D	43	B	11	E	63	B	14	C	33	C	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Flora Lane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	A	7	B	16	-	-	-	-	A	10	A	10	A	10	A	10
Seminary Place	D	41	B	11		47	B	12	E	59	B	17	D	47	C	34	D	35	B	14	E	60	D	46	E	60	D	46
Seminary Road	C	25	C	32	C	25	D	36	C	31	D	46	C	24	D	38	C	23	C	34	D	27	D	36	D	27	D	36
16th Street (MD 390)	C	25	C	27	C	26	C	26	D	51	F	123	C	24	F	148	B	15	F	94	B	16	F	81	B	16	F	81

Legend	
LOS	Delay (sec)
A	<10
B	10-20
C	20-35
D	35-55
E	55-80
F	>80

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION

MOE Measures	Alternative 1 No build	Alternative 2 TSM/TDM	Alternative 3 Master Plan	Alternative 5	Alternative 5B	Cycle Track
1. Automobile Accessibility						
Determined using factors of travel time including vehicular delay	1	1	3	3	3	3
2. Pedestrian Accessibility						
Determined using factors of Pedestrian Level of Comfort, presence of pedestrian refuge area, crossing distance, and number of crossings	1	2	5	4	5	5
3. Bicycle Accessibility						
Determined using factors of Bicycle Level of Comfort and consistency with the Montgomery County Bike Master Plan and SHA bicycle standards	1	4	3	4	4	5
4. Transit Accessibility						
Determined using factors such as availability of queue jumps, opportunity for TSP, and on-street bus lanes	1	4	3	3	3	3
5. Safety						
Determined using factors of access points, conflict points, presence of a safety buffer, presence of a median, number of crosswalks, and 16th Street redesign.	1	2	4	5	5	5
6. Community Considerations						
Determined based on potential for aesthetic improvements	1	2	4	4	4	4
Determined based on number of displacements, impacts, and parking impacts	5	4	2	2	2	2

LEGEND					
Designation:	Worst				Best
Color Code:	1	2	3	4	5

AS VEHICLE OPERATORS ON MARYLAND ROADS BICYCLISTS HAVE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It's the law:

Section 21-1202 Annotated Code of Maryland

> "Vehicle" means any device in, on, or by which any individual or property is or might be transported or towed on a highway.
>
> *Annotated Code of Maryland*

It's MDOT Policy:

Twenty-Year Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan

As part of roadway construction projects, SHA provides on-road features like these:

wide outside lane for bicycle compatibility

minimum four-foot-wide shoulder

bicycle lane/pocket bike lane markings

Bicycle Route & Share the Road signage

And off-road features like:

shared-use path (hiker/biker trail)

Bicycles provide a valuable transportation option for many people and will help Maryland meet our state's long-term transportation needs.

BICYCLE FAQ

Why are bicyclists allowed on the road?

Bicyclists are vehicle drivers, too. By law, "vehicle" means "any device in, on, or by which any individual or property is or might be transported or towed on a highway." (Section 11-176, Annotated Code of Maryland) Every person operating a bicycle in a public area has all the rights granted to and is subject to all the duties required of the driver of a vehicle. (Section 21-1202, Annotated Code of Maryland)

Why are bicyclists allowed to ride next to cars that are going fast?

Bicyclists are prohibited on roadways with a posted maximum speed greater than 50 mph unless a continuous paved shoulder or bicycle lane is provided. In addition, a person may not ride a bicycle on an expressway or on any controlled-access highway with signs stating that bicycles are prohibited.

There's a hiker/biker trail right next to the road. Shouldn't bicyclists be riding there?:

Maryland law requires SHA to include bicycle accommodations in roadway construction projects whenever appropriate and feasible. That's because not everyone who rides a bicycle does so for the same purpose. Hiker/biker trails are shared-use paths suitable for joggers, pedestrians, dog-walkers, children, babies in strollers, inexperienced or recreational cyclists, and others who enjoy exercising and spending time outdoors. Individuals who use a bicycle as their primary means of transportation may find that on-road bicycle accommodations better suit their needs. By removing themselves from the "mix" of hiker/biker trail-users, on-road bicyclists can reach their destinations more efficiently and lessen the risk that trail-users will find themselves in the path of bicyclists focused on getting from Point A to Point B as quickly as possible.

Shouldn't bicyclists ride on sidewalks?

The law allows bicyclists to ride on sidewalks only in Montgomery County. Not permitting bicycles on sidewalks minimizes conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians.

Isn't it a law that bicyclists have to wear a helmet?

In Maryland, everyone under age 16 is required to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle on public property. Some local jurisdictions have requirements for helmet use that are tougher than State law. Wearing a helmet is a good safety measure for everyone who rides a bike: 85 percent of head and brain injuries resulting from bicycle crashes could be prevented if riders wore bicycle safety helmets.

Every day as I drive downtown I see bicyclists and motorists behaving in rude and dangerous ways. Whatever happened to common courtesy?

Motorists and bicyclists who share the road—especially in heavily traveled urban and suburban areas—need to look out for one another. Motorists should leave at least three feet between their vehicles and any bicycles they pass, and bicyclists should leave at least three feet between themselves and parked cars. By law, bicycles are vehicles: motorists should treat them as such, and bicyclists should obey all traffic laws, including those that govern left- and right-turns, lights and stop signs, right-of-way, and proper lane position.

I bike—where can I get more information on bicycling in Maryland?

Additional information is available on SHA's website at *www.marylandroads.com,* **click on Bicycling under EXPLORE MD, or by telephone at 1-888-204-4828.**

Handout materials are also available at the bicycling station during today's meeting.

MARYLAND

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BUSINESS AND CUSTOMER SURVEY

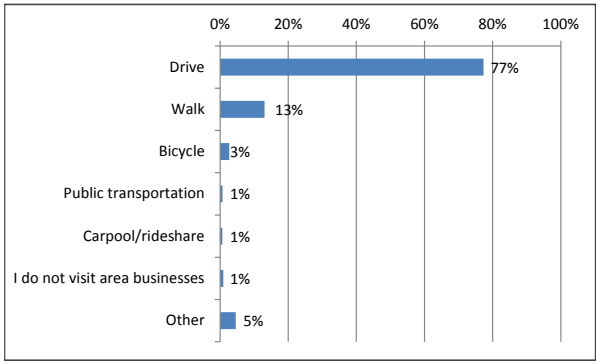
Respondent Totals

	Business	Customer	Total
Written Collection	12	72	84
Online Collection	12	1,291	1,303
Spanish Versions	0	3	3
Total	24	1,366	1,390

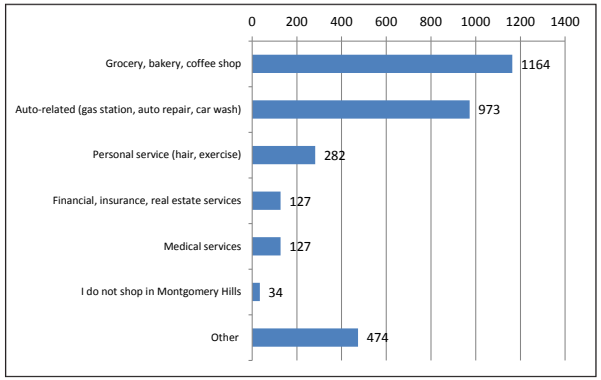
Parking Impacts to Businesses

If parking in front of your business is reduced or eliminated, how much would additional nearby off-street parking benefit your business?	Number	Percent
Very Much	11	65%
Somewhat	4	23%
Not at all	2	12%
If parking is not available in front of a business, how many minutes will you walk from a parking lot to reach that business? (Choose one)	**Number**	**Percent**
Less than 5 minutes	846	68%
5-10 minutes	239	19%
10-15 minutes	32	3%
More than 15 minutes	17	1%
I would not walk from a parking lot to a business in Montgomery Hills	115	9%

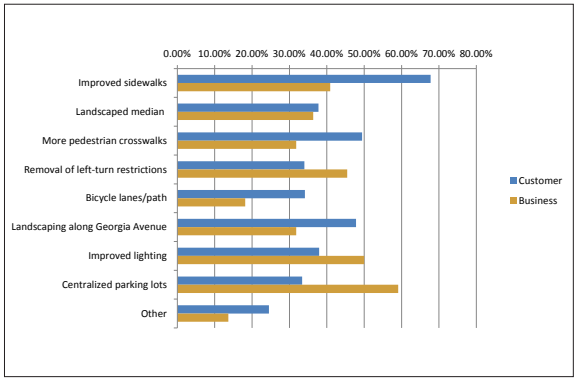
How They Arrive



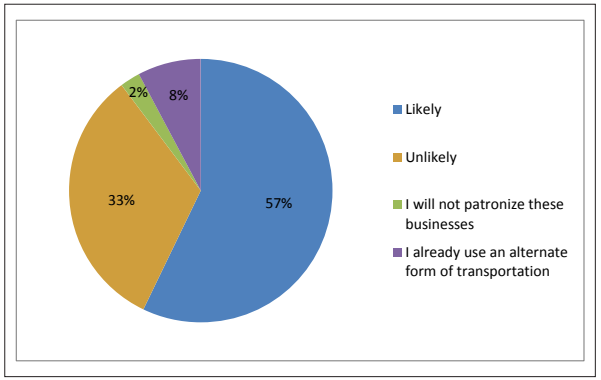
Why Customers Visit



What Improvements They Want to See



Willingness to Use Alternate Forms of Transportation with Multimodal Improvements



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

SHA State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Requires an assessment of a project's impacts on the natural, cultural, and human environment. An analysis of reasonable alternatives must be prepared, including minimization and mitigation for unavoidable impacts. The results of the analysis must be included in the decision-making process and made available to the public.

Natural Environment

- Geology/Groundwater Resources
- Soils
- Surface Water
- Floodplains
- Wetlands
- Aquatic Life
- Wildlife

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act

Regulates dredge and fill of Waters of the United States. Guidelines published by the Environmental Protection Agency for evaluating alternatives require that the Corps of Engineers evaluate the proposed project for environmental impacts (including historic and rare/threatened/endangered species impacts) and select the least environmentally damaging, practicable alternative.

Endangered Species Act

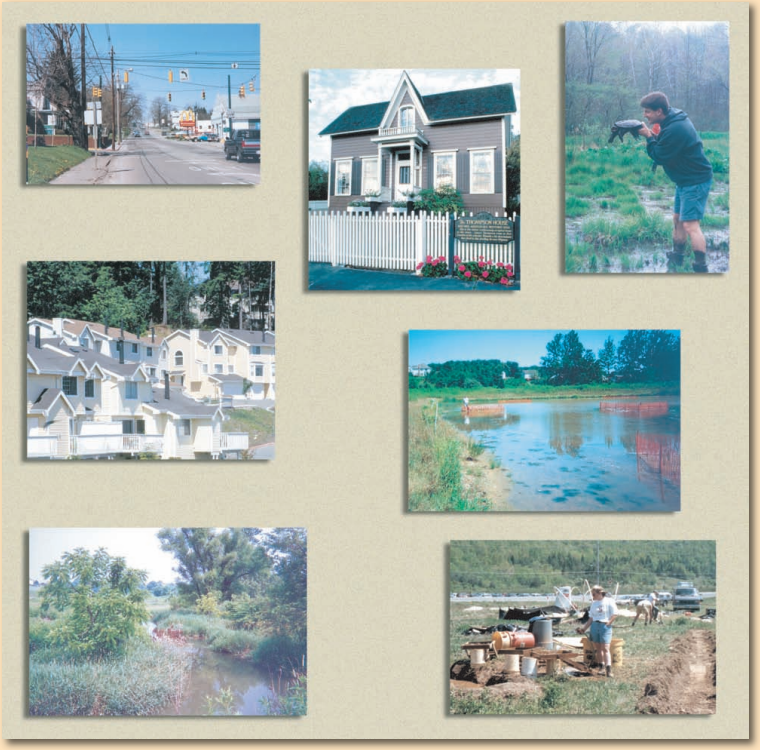
Ensures that actions are not taken to jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of such species.

Cultural Environment

- Historic Structures
- Archaeological Sites

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

Requires that agencies take into account the effects of a project on properties that are included in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Socio-Economic Environment

- Demographics
- Community Facilities
- Economic Setting and Land Use
- Noise
- Air

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act

Requires that special effort be made to preserve publicly owned public parks and recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges and historic sites. No project which requires land from these resources may be approved unless 1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land and 2) the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.

Clean Air Act and Clean Air Act Amendments

A microscale air quality analysis must be performed to determine if there are violations of the State or National Ambient Air Quality Standards for carbon monoxide. Also, a conformity analysis must be completed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization to make sure the Transportation Improvement Plan conforms to the State Implementation Plan.

Farmland Protection Policy Act

Requires that federal programs minimize conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses (does not apply to farmland that is zoned or committed (planned) for urban development).

Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice)

Requires that agencies identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Resources		Alternative 1: No- Build	Alternative 2: TSM/TDM	Alternative 3: Master Plan	Alternative 5	Alternative 5 with Option B	Alternative 5 with Cycle Track
Relocations/Property	Residential Displacements	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Business Displacements	0	0	5	5	5	5
	Number of Impacted Properties	0	42	44	44	44	44
	Right-of-way Required (acres)	0	1.4	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.4
Natural Resources	Woodland/Forest Impacts (acres)	0	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7
	Hazardous Waste Sites (no.)	0	13	13	13	13	13
Cultural Resources	Historic Sites (no.)	0	0	1	1	1	1
	Archeological Sites (no.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 4(f) Resources	Name of Resource(s)	N/A	N/A	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church	Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church
	Resource Impact (acre)	N/A	N/A	0.26	0.24	0.27	0.24
Total cost (million $) *Present day dollars*		$0	$17-$24	$25 - $34	$30 - $40	$31 - $41	$33 - $43

***There will be no impacts on the following resources by any alternative:** *Rare, threatened or endangered species; streams; 100-year floodplain; wetlands; prime farmland; Chesapeake Bay Critical Area*

NEXT STEPS

- **Evaluate and address public/agency comments**
  Winter 2015/2016

- **Identify SHA's Preferred Alternative and Conceptual Mitigation**
  Winter 2015/2016

- **Obtain Location and Design Approvals**
  Summer 2016

STAY CONNECTED

For information and updates about the MD 97 – Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study, please visit www.roads.maryland.gov under Projects and Studies, SHA Projects Page, Montgomery County.

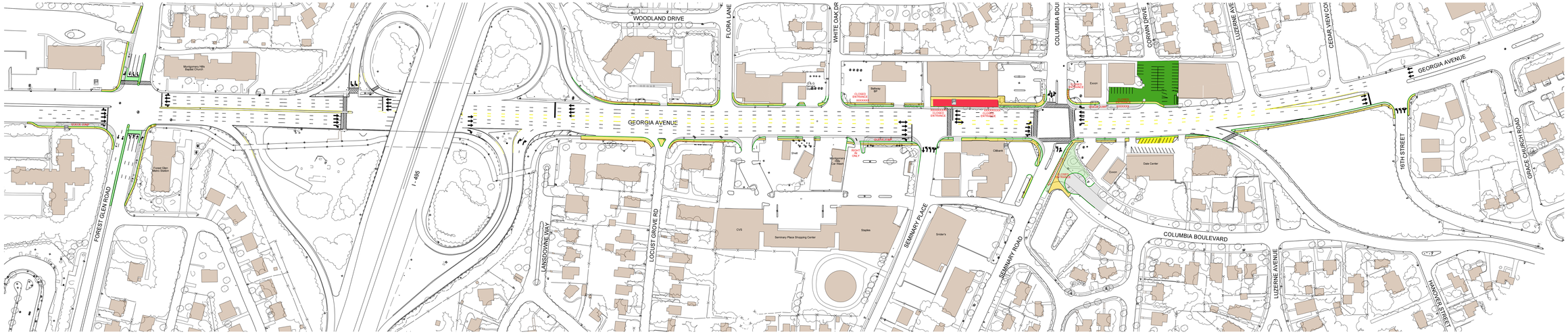
Contact:

Mr. Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Phone: 410-545-8518
Toll Free: 800-548-5026
The MD Relay Service can assist teletype users at 7-1-1.
jbeck@sha.state.md.us

Maryland State Highway Administration
Project Management Division
Mailstop C-301
707 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

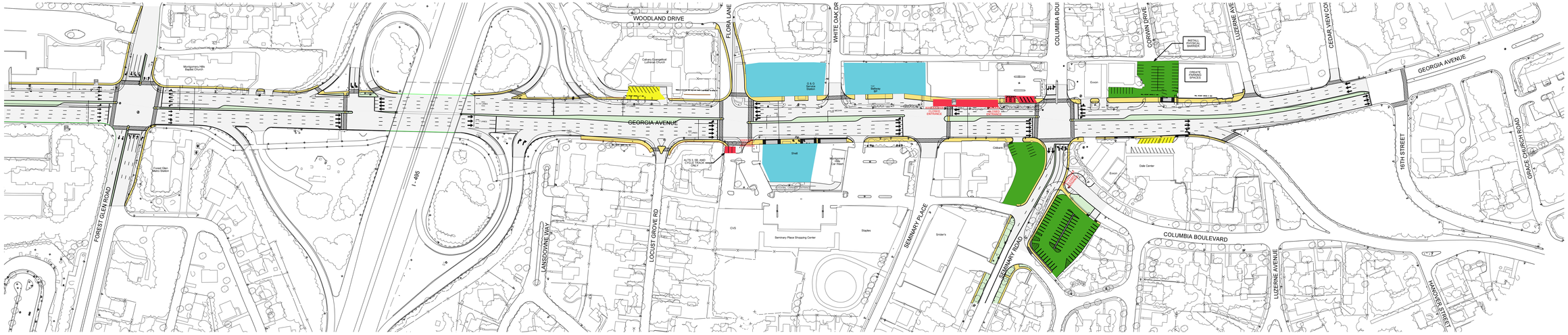
Alternative 2 - TSM/TDM - Parking Impacts and Opportunities

MARYLAND 97


WOODLAND DRIVE
FLORA LANE
WHITE OAK DR
COLUMBIA BOU
CORNIN DRIVE
LUZERNE AVE
CEDAR VIEW CO
GEORGIA AVENUE
GEORGIA AVENUE
FOREST GLEN ROAD
I-495
LANSDOWNE WAY
LOCUST GROVE RD
SEMINARY PLACE
SEMINARY ROAD
COLUMBIA BOULEVARD
LUZERNE AVENUE
16TH STREET
HANOVER STREET
GRACE CHURCH ROAD
Montgomery Hills Baptist Church
Walter Reed Nat'l Mil Med Ctr
Walter Reed Gate Guard
Walter Reed Gate Guard
CVS
Seminary Place Shopping Center
Staples
Snider's
Shell
Bethesda Car Wash
Citibank
Exxon
Exxon
Date Center
Bethesda Car Wash
CLOSED ENTRANCE
CLOSED ENTRANCE
CLOSED ENTRANCE

Alternatives 3, 5, 5B, Cycle Track - Parking Impacts and Opportunities

MARYLAND 97



LEGEND

- TOTAL PARKING REMOVAL AREA
- PARTIAL PARKING REMOVAL AREA
- MODIFIED PARKING AREA
- POTENTIAL PARKING AREA

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

Alternatives 3, 5, 5B and Cycle Track

November 2015

Scale: 1" = 80'

Alternative 1 - No Build

MARYLAND
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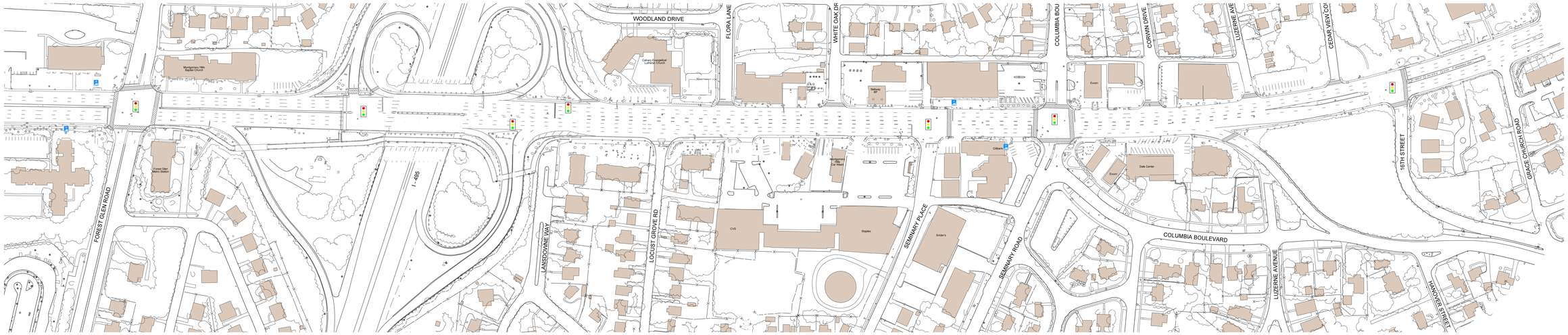

LEGEND

- PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED MEDIAN / BUFFER
- PROPOSED ROADWAY
- CUTFILL BOUNDARY
- DISPLACEMENTS
- BIKE BOX (THRU) POCKET SHADING
- PROPOSED DRIVEWAY
- LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE BUFFER
- EXISTING SIGNAL LOCATION
- POTENTIAL SIGNAL LOCATION
- SIGNAL TO BE REMOVED

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

Alternative 1

November 2015

Scale: 1" = 80'

Alternative 2 - TSM/TDM

MARYLAND
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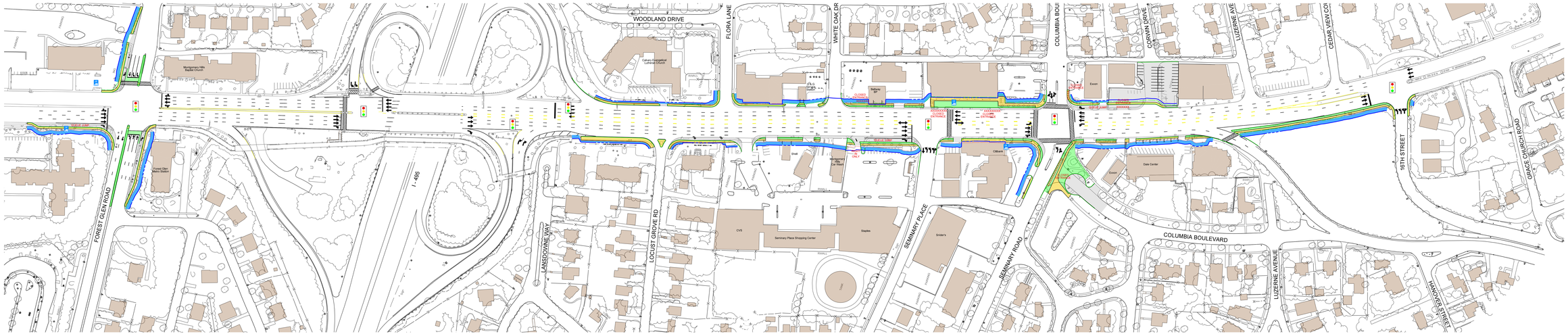
WOODLAND DRIVE
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HANOVER STREET
16TH STREET
GRACE CHURCH ROAD
Montgomery Hills Baptist Church
Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church
Forest Glen Metro Station
CVS
Seminary Place Shopping Center
Staples
Snider's
Shell
Citibank
Exxon
Date Center
CLOSED CROSSWALK
CLOSED CROSSWALK
CLOSED CROSSWALK

Alternative 3 - Master Plan

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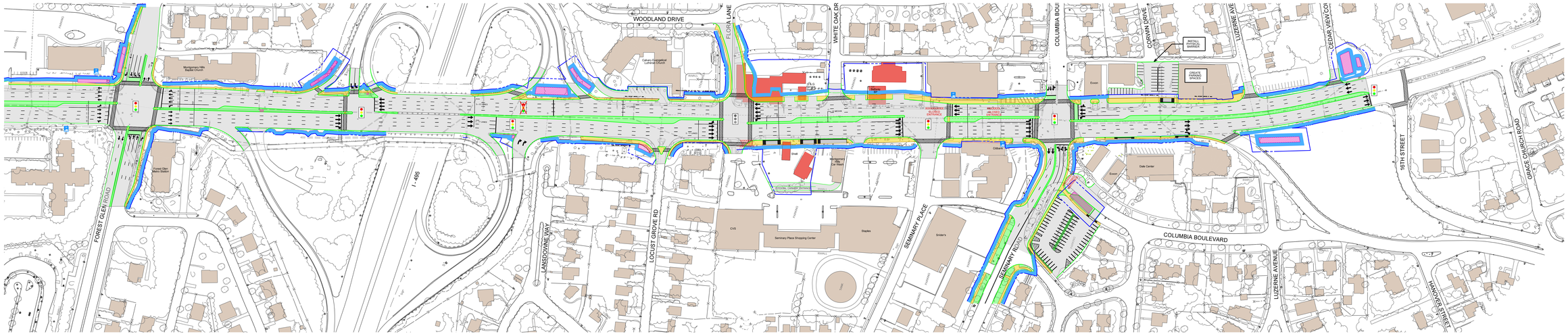
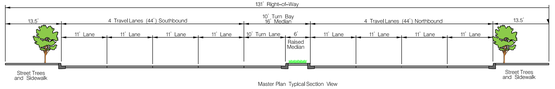
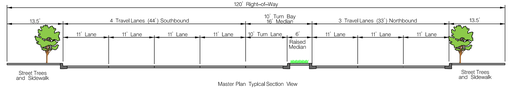


LEGEND

- PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED MEDIAN / BUFFER
- PROPOSED ROADWAY
- CUTFILL BOUNDARY
- DEPLACEMENTS
- BIKE BOX / THRU POCKET SHADING
- PROPOSED DRIVEWAY
- LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE BUFFER
- EXISTING SIGNAL LOCATION
- POTENTIAL SIGNAL LOCATION
- SIGNAL TO BE REMOVED
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEATURE



Master Plan Typical Section View



Master Plan Typical Section View

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

Alternative 3

November 2015

Scale: 1" = 60'

Alternative 5

MARYLAND
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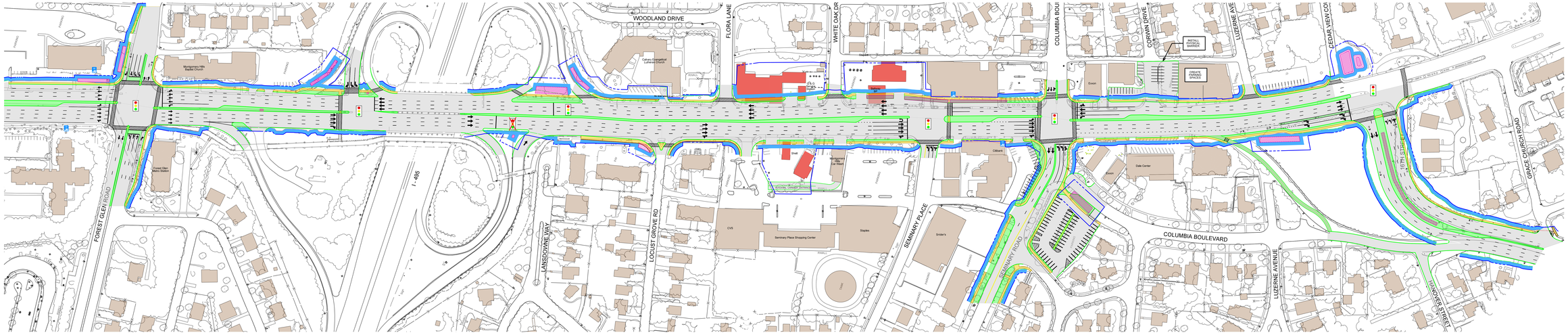

LEGEND

- PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED MEDIAN / BUFFER
- PROPOSED ROADWAY
- CUTFILL BOUNDARY
- DEPLACEMENTS
- BIKE BOX / THRU POCKET SHADING
- PROPOSED DRIVEWAY
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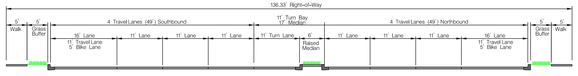
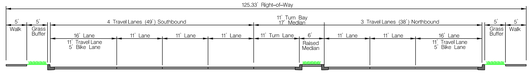
- EXISTING SIGNAL LOCATION
- POTENTIAL SIGNAL LOCATION
- SIGNAL TO BE REMOVED
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEATURE



4 Northbound / 4 Southbound Typical Section



3 Northbound / 4 Southbound Typical Section

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

Alternative 5

November 2015

Scale: 1" = 60'

Alternative 5B - with Flora Ln Intersection

MARYLAND
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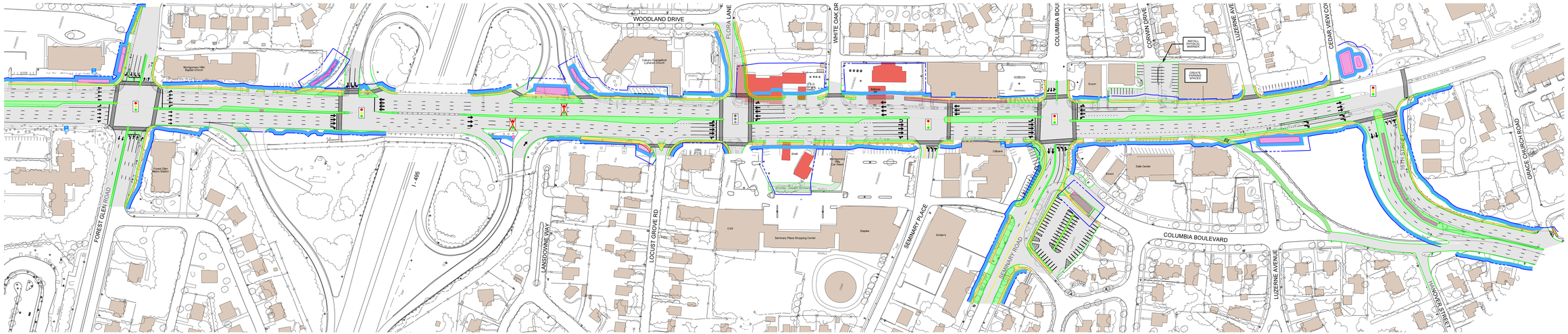

LEGEND

- PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED MEDIAN / BUFFER
- PROPOSED ROADWAY
- CUTFILL BOUNDARY
- DISPLACEMENTS
- BIKE BOX /THRU POCKET SHADING
- PROPOSED DRIVEWAY
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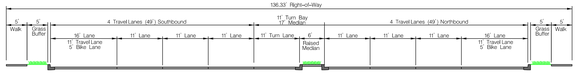
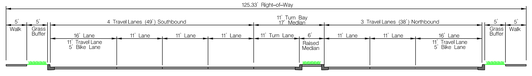
- POTENTIAL SIGNAL LOCATION
- SIGNAL TO BE REMOVED
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEATURE



4 Northbound / 4 Southbound Typical Section



3 Northbound / 4 Southbound Typical Section

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MARYLAND
SHA
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

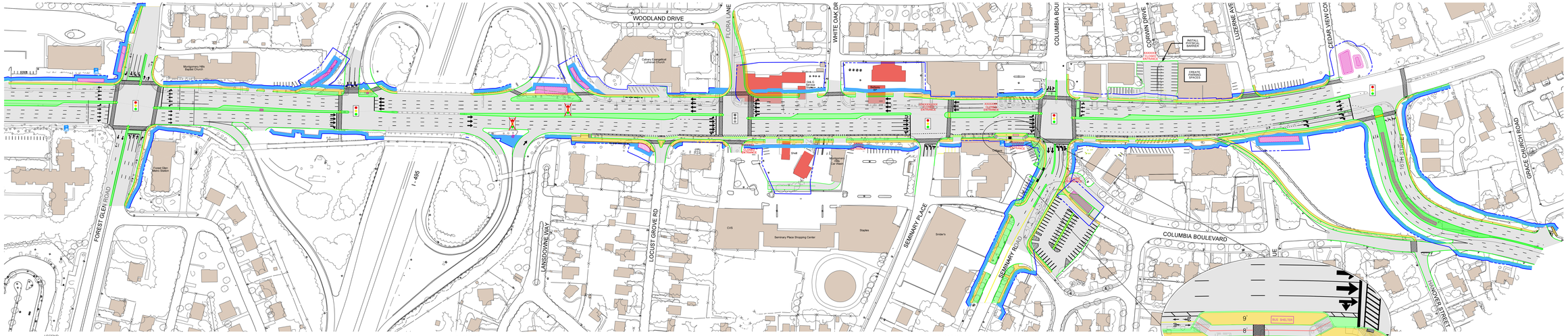
Alternative 5B

November 2015

Scale: 1" = 40'

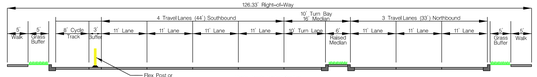
Alternative 5 - Cycle Track

MARYLAND
97

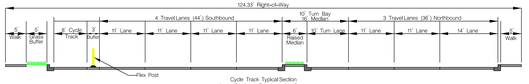


LEGEND

- PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED MEDIAN / BUFFER
- PROPOSED ROADWAY
- CUTFILL BOUNDARY
- DISPLACEMENTS
- BIKE BOX /THRU PICKET SHADING
- PROPOSED DRIVEWAY
- LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE BUFFER
- EXISTING SIGNAL LOCATION
- POTENTIAL SIGNAL LOCATION
- SIGNAL TO BE REMOVED
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEATURE



Cycle Track Typical Section
from Pedestrian Bridge to Seminary Road



Cycle Track Typical Section
from Seminary Road to 16th Street

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MARYLAND
SHA
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

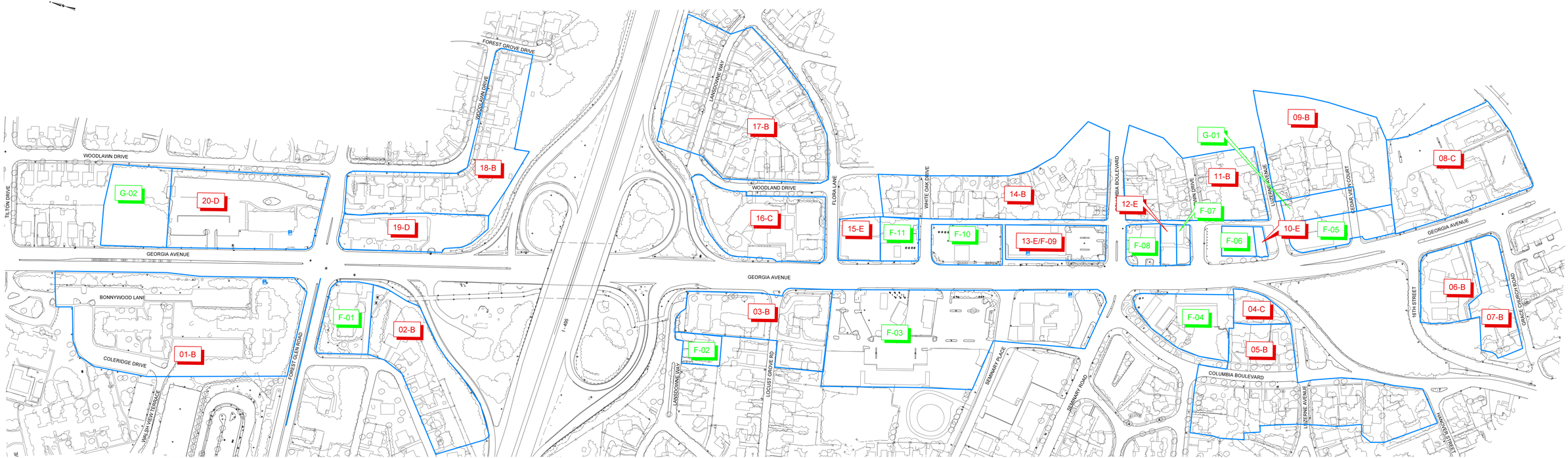
Cycle Track

November 2015

Scale: 1" = 60'

MD 97 - Montgomery Hills - Noise Sensitive Areas (NSA)

MARYLAND
97



LEGEND

X-00	NON–NOISE SENSITIVE LAND USE
00-X	NOISE SENSITIVE LAND USE
	NSA BOUNDARY

SHA
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION

Noise Sensitive Areas

November 2001

Scale: 1" = 60'

CORRESPONDENCE

MD 97 MONTGOMEY HILLS

PROJECT PLANNING STUDY

GRACE CHURCH RECTORY, WOODSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD
9124, 9126, 9128, & 9130 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

December 24, 2015

Mr. Jeremy Beck, Project Manager
Project Management Division
Maryland State Highway Administration
707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop C-301
Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study

Dear Mr. Beck,

We, the residents of the homes located at the intersection of 16th Street and Georgia Avenue, located towards the downtown Silver Spring end of the Project Study Area, unanimously agree that Option 3 of the options presently under review, is in the best interests of the State and the neighborhood.

As residents directly affected within the study area, we are keenly aware of the benefits of the Montgomery Hills area of Georgia Avenue as well as its struggles. We know that the State Highway Administration (SHA) is endeavoring to increase the traffic flow along Georgia Avenue, improve pedestrian/cycling safety, while also trying to improve aesthetic qualities.

Therefore, we agree that reasonably increasing the number of lanes will improve the Level of Service. However, we question bringing all of Southbound Georgia Avenue to the traffic light at 16th Street. Presently, the existing right hand divergence for unsignalized southbound traffic not intending to travel to downtown Silver Spring maintains good traffic flow and thins down the southbound Georgia Avenue traffic significantly! We question why all the traffic would want to be cued to a single intersection that will stop traffic entirely and create back-up while generating additional air pollution at the same time. Clearly letting traffic continue south onto 16th Street BEFORE the existing 16th Street & Georgia Avenue hammerhead is a better way to maintain traffic flow.

Unquestionably, continuing the center raised green median into Montgomery Hills will be relieving to the eyes as well as providing a much needed safety measure that separates northbound and southbound traffic. Also, as neighbors who walk to our nearby retail establishments, we know firsthand the need to make the sidewalks safer by moving the sidewalks away from their present condition next

to the curb face. Creating a row of trees and providing grass before a new, wider sidewalk area, will be more inviting to neighbors to walk (instead of drive) as well as providing a much needed safety measure. As is, the sidewalk is too narrow and close to the street to allow our children to walk unattended to their favorite grocery, deli and sandwich shops.

Lastly, we want to mention that we were surprised during the Public Hearing held at Blair High School, that the speed limit was stated as 35 mph. Although a lot of focus is on when traffic peaks, we do have concerns about the lane alignments during other than rush hours. Vehicles (trucks, not just cars) and motorcycles are often travelling well over the posted speed limit. Air quality and noise pollution should be significantly weighted as part of the review process. We suggest better speed enforcement techniques, whether by police patrol, speed cameras or other traffic calming measures, to slow traffic, increase safety, reduce loud noise levels, and improve the wonderful community we presently enjoy.

Our community of homes is happy to engage more directly with the State Highway Administration. Please feel free to contact us directly if you would like to dialogue with us more directly on ways to provide more fluid traffic flow and improve both neighborhood attractiveness and safety.

Thank you for your interest,

Sincerely,

9124 Georgia Avenue	9126 Georgia Avenue	9128 Georgia Avenue	9130 Georgia Avenue
Derek Sharp	Chintan Tripathi	Adam Nadelhaft	Charles Segerman
Karen Sharp	Bhairavi Tripathi	Allison Nadelhaft	Hallie Segerman

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Adam Nadelhaft
Ms. Allison Nadelhaft
9128 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Ms. Nadelhaft:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. We have also noted your opposition to the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street. The potential realignment of southbound 16th Street with Alternative 5 is intended to improve pedestrian safety due to the current intersection's lack of a signal-protected crosswalk. The project team will continue to evaluate the traffic impacts of the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street before identifying a preferred alternative for the project.

Landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along MD 97 to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue.

Your recommendation for increased enforcement of the 35 mph speed limit on Georgia Avenue to prevent speeding during off-peak travel periods will be forwarded to appropriate State and local agencies. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Chintan Tripathi
Ms. Bhairavi Tripathi
9126 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Ms. Tripathi:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. We have also noted your opposition to the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street. The potential realignment of southbound 16th Street with Alternative 5 is intended to improve pedestrian safety due to the current intersection's lack of a signal-protected crosswalk. The project team will continue to evaluate the traffic impacts of the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street before identifying a preferred alternative for the project.

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Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Derek Sharp
Ms. Karen Sharp
9124 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Ms. Sharp:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. We have also noted your opposition to the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street. The potential realignment of southbound 16th Street with Alternative 5 is intended to improve pedestrian safety due to the current intersection's lack of a signal-protected crosswalk. The project team will continue to evaluate the traffic impacts of the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street before identifying a preferred alternative for the project.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Charles Segerman
Ms. Hallie Segerman
9130 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Ms. Segerman:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. We have also noted your opposition to the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street. The potential realignment of southbound 16th Street with Alternative 5 is intended to improve pedestrian safety due to the current intersection's lack of a signal-protected crosswalk. The project team will continue to evaluate the traffic impacts of the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street before identifying a preferred alternative for the project.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Anna Priddy **DATE**

ADDRESS 1714 Belvedere Blvd

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20902

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Please ~~incorporate~~ coordinate with WMATA over ~~upcoming~~ possible upcoming changes to the Forest Glen Metro stop. A pedestrian tunnel under Georgia Avenue to the east side of Forest Glen Road is urgently needed as the existing road crossings are not safe due to the high volume of vehicle traffic. In the meantime, that intersection needs pedestrian crossing signals that are independent of any green lights for vehicles. Currently cars that can turn on a green light play chicken with pedestrians.

I support option 5 with option B because it would create left turn lanes and elimate the center reversible lane. I fully support the widened 5 foot sidewalk with curb set backs. The current configuration of narrow sidewalks with no curb setbacks is pedestrian unfriendly and unsafe. I do not have an opinion on the proposed cycle track as no information was provided about why it is needed on Georgia Ave instead of another nearby roadway with less traffic (for example, does ~~the~~ proposed cycle track link to other existing or planned bike paths?) While I strongly support improved bicycle infrastructure in Montgomery County, it is not clear that the best use of resources is along such a busy roadway and next to Beltway onramps.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Ms. Anna Priddy
1714 Belvedere Road
Silver Spring MD 20902

Dear Ms. Priddy:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Your suggestion that a pedestrian tunnel crossing Georgia Avenue at the Forest Glen Metro entrance be included as a component of this project has been noted. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), in conjunction with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) completed a feasibility study of pedestrian tunnel and bridge concepts in 2013. As shown at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing, the current scope of this project does not include the potential pedestrian tunnel. SHA will, however, coordinate with MCDOT and WMATA to raise this concern, which was identified by multiple residents to investigate how the pedestrian tunnel effort may be advanced.

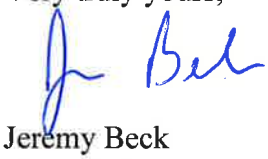
In response to community complaints about the No Turn on Red restriction that was recently added to eastbound MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) at MD 97 (Georgia Avenue), SHA concurs with your concerns and is pleased to inform you that we have requested that the restriction be lifted, and that the existing "No Turn on Red" sign be replaced by a "Turning Traffic Must Yield to Pedestrians" sign. This type of work normally takes 60 to 90 days to complete, weather and scheduling permitting.

Although no on-road bicycle facilities are currently provided along Georgia Avenue, bicycle use on Georgia Avenue is legal and some bicyclists do ride along the Georgia Avenue corridor. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The project team notes that Montgomery County's bicycle master plan recommends providing bicycle improvements on the local roadway network instead of along Georgia Avenue. Alternative 3 is consistent with this plan. However, SHA's bicycle policy states that on-road bicycle facilities should be considered wherever possible; therefore, the other build alternatives propose some on-road bicycle improvements. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,



Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Mr. Andrew Bossi, Senior Planning Specialist, Montgomery County DOT
Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____ **DATE** _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 5, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

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MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
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PLEASE PRINT

NAME HARM JP DASHOA **DATE** _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☒ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
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- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 5, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

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Very truly yours,

J Beck

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

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MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Barbara and Michael Milton **DATE** 11/12/15

ADDRESS 1511 Live ~~Hills~~ Oak Dr.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

We like the Alternative 5 with cycle track option. But we want the Car Wash Business on Georgia Ave to be removed. It adds much unnecessary congestion. Plus it is an eyesore. You are removing gas stations. Why not remove the car wash?

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
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- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Ms. Barbara Milton
Mr. Michael Milton
1511 Live Oak Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Ms. Milton:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. When the properties and type of impacts are determined, the information is then presented to the public using alternative maps at public involvement events and various publications for comments. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the project is funded for detail design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detail design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requests of the detail design, while minimizing impact to personal property of the public.

Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. The build alternatives would impact between 42-44 properties. The majority of the potential property impacts are limited to parking areas and driveways. Where possible, SHA will attempt to mitigate impacts to parking spaces. In all cases, property owners will receive just compensation for the property to be acquired.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Brian Ditzler **DATE** 12/10/15

ADDRESS 1225 Noyes Drive

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I was a member of the Stakeholder Group representing the Woodside Park Civic Association, a neighborhood of about 625 single family homes ~~[illegible]~~ on the eastern side of Georgia Ave whose northern border is Dale Drive + Colombia Blvd. All our residents travel through and shop in Montgomery Hills and agree the traffic there, poor sidewalks, limits on left turns + non existent bike paths are greatly in need of improvement.

The best alternative still under consideration is Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option. The wide center median, left turn lanes, elimination of 2 traffic lights at 495, protected bicycle lanes, wide sidewalks, new light at Flora Lane and 7 lanes of traffic make this clearly the best option. Specifically, separated and protected bicycle lanes are the only safe way to provide bike lanes, especially on a busy road like MD 97.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Brian Ditzler
1225 Noyes Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Ditzler:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Barbara Ditzler **DATE** Dec 4, 2015

ADDRESS 1225 Noyes Dr

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

(1) It's essential to have a median - preferably green when possible
(2) The car wash is a hazard and should be moved so cars are not blocking Georgia Ave - It happens OFTEN
(3) Flora Lane new signal helps neighbors to use the area
(4) The cycle track in Alternative 5 makes it friendlier for everyone
(5) Improving the Forest Glen intersection benefits everyone in Montgomery Hills
(6) Improving the parking area behind Sniders would benefit Seminary Rd as the Sniders entrance there is very difficult
(7) The wooded triangle area at 16th St. should be made attractive in the process - helps keep homeless away too
(8) Bury all power lines! and have only essential poles
(9) Work with zoning and have "cluster malls" with complementary signs - e.g. the "tudor" buildings should look alike
(10) Post 25 mph speed limits - slow + steady is more efficient
Vote is for alternative 5 - With Cycle Track

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Ms. Barbara Ditzler
1225 Noyes Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Ditzler:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

Landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along MD 97 to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project.

The project team has noted your recommendation to move the car wash. That property is not currently identified as a displacement under any of the project's alternatives. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function.

Your suggestion that utilities be placed underground is appreciated. The amount of utility impacts will depend on which alternative is selected, and the relocation of utilities will be determined once the project moves into the design phase.

The project team will forward your suggestions about parking and signage to Montgomery County for their consideration. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Mr. Andrew Bossi, Senior Planning Specialist, Montgomery County DOT
Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Brenda Athanas **DATE** 11/13/15
ADDRESS 2019 Glen Ross Rd.
CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Every time a project is done in our area it make the traffic worse. When the beltway exits were reconfigured we have had more congestion on Georgia Ave and the beltway exits.

It has caused more accidents and longer wait time at the lights.

The people who design these changes DO NOT TRAVEL these roads.

I have lived in this neighborhood since 1969 and the roads are getting worse when ever there are changes.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [x] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Ms. Brenda Athanas
2019 Glen Ross Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Athanas:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 1 – No Build has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Bruce Rosenthal **DATE** 12/30/15

ADDRESS 2547 Holman Ave

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Remove the CAR WASH -
- It interfers with traffic on Georgia Ave.
- It is incompatible with several of the Alternatives
- It is an "eye sore" in our community

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

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Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Mr. Bruce Rosenthal
2547 Holman Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Rosenthal:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Your recommendation to remove the car wash is noted. That property is not currently identified as a displacement under any of the project's alternatives. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Charles Seegerman **DATE** December 22, 2015

ADDRESS 9130 Georgia Avenue

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Having followed the design through its various iterations, I'm presently of the mind that OPTION 3 is the best of the options being proposed.

I'm not in favor of bringing all the traffic (northbound & southbound) to the intersection of Georgia Avenue & 16th Street. Using the right southbound lane to diverge traffic off of Georgia Avenue BEFORE 16th Street @ Georgia Ave is much more efficient than bringing all traffic (going to Silver Spring & Downtown) to a single light.

In addition Option 3 provides a much needed raised (Green) median separating northbound & southbound traffic. Option 3 also provides space for street trees (needed to beautify Georgia Avenue) and moves the sidewalk away from next to the curb, where the sidewalk presently exists.

Lastly, I was surprised to hear that the speed limit for the project area was 35MPH. As a resident, I see speeds far in excess of 35MPH when not rush hour. I urge greater enforcement in order to improve safety and reduce noise.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☑ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

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Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Charles Segerman
9130 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Segerman:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. The project team has also noted your opposition to the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street. Your recommendation for increased enforcement of the 35 mph speed limit on Georgia Avenue to prevent speeding during off-peak travel periods will be forwarded to appropriate State and local agencies.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Dan Fallon **DATE** 11/22/15

ADDRESS 2623 Holman Ave

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☒ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

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State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Dan Fallon
2623 Holman Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Fallon:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 – Four Lanes Southbound and Three to Four Lanes Northbound has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Dan Willett **DATE** 11/14/15

ADDRESS 9402 Russell Rd.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [x] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

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Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Dan Willett
9402 Russell Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Willett:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____ **DATE** _____

ADDRESS David I. Bloom, 9317 Greyrock Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

1. There is no discussion in the analysis of the disruption that would be caused by any construction. The period of time when the plan would make things worse needs to considered
2. Any plan must ensure that residents located between Georgia + Colesville (Woodside and the area north of Dale) can access their homes. At times, it can be impossible to access because of turn restrictions and back-ups to 495.
3. Adding bike lanes & TSM/TDM would make congestion worse

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☑ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

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Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 10, 2016

Mr. David Bloom
9317 Greyrock Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Bloom:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team understands that construction activity may have a negative impact on traffic flow and could create an inconvenience to area residents. It is possible some temporary lane closures or temporary closures of access points may be necessary during construction. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will develop a "maintenance of traffic" plan in coordination with Montgomery County. During the construction phase, SHA will keep local residents and business owners/operators informed of any changes to traffic flow resulting from construction activities as they occur.

Although no on-road bicycle facilities are currently provided along Georgia Avenue, bicycle use on Georgia Avenue is legal and some bicyclists do ride along the Georgia Avenue corridor. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The project team notes that Montgomery County's bicycle master plan recommends providing bicycle improvements on the local roadway network instead of along Georgia Avenue. Alternative 3 is consistent with this plan. However, SHA's bicycle policy states that on-road bicycle facilities should be considered wherever possible; therefore, the other build alternatives propose some on-road bicycle improvements. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Jeremy Beck

From: Derek R. Sharp [drsharp@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, December 02, 2015 5:13 PM
To: Jeremy Beck
Subject: MD 97 Study

Jeremy,

I am a resident that lives near the 16th street and Georgia Avenue intersection (9124 Georgia Avenue). We are appalled that changing the southbound 16th street traffic to this intersection is being considered as an alternative. What would be acceptable to us is to move the entire intersection slightly north to Cedar View Court.

Thank you.

Derek R. Sharp, **PMP, ITILv3**
301-908-7187

Jeremy Beck

From: Jeremy Beck
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 3:24 PM
To: 'drsharp@verizon.net'
Subject: MD 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study

Dear Mr. Sharp:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your opposition to the potential realignment of southbound 16th Street has been noted by the project team. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me.

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-545-8518 / 800-548-5026
www.roads.maryland.gov
Follow us on Twitter @MDSHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Donald + André Williams **DATE** Dec. 16, 2015
ADDRESS 9108 16th Street
CITY Silver Spring **STATE** Maryland **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment of this important project. I consider the following as the two major problems in the project area: (1) the currently legal, though ill-advised and unsafe vehicle left turns into and out of merchant establishments along the corridor; and (2) the lack of any light-controlled crosswalk on Georgia Avenue between Seminary Place and the westbound Beltway exit.

My preferred alternative is "Alternative 3 – Master Plan." I do not support any of the Alternative 5 solutions. Each would relocate the ramp to southbound 16th Street to the signalized intersection with northbound 16th Street, thereby causing construction phase disruptions that are not present under Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. Alternative 5 maps show a Limit of Disturbance (LOD) Buffer which proceeds through several residential properties (including my own) on 16th Street. I assume this buffer area is the portion of residential properties that will be required to accommodate construction work.

I am very concerned with how such a disruption will impact my residence during what is sure to be a prolonged construction phase! For example, how much of our property (which includes a driveway) will be unavailable for use during construction? To what extent will access to and exit from our home (by foot and vehicle) be hindered? Will mail delivery, required service visits to our house, etc. be made more difficult? I would be very interested in hearing from SHA as to how these disruption issues will be dealt with if an Alternative 5 solution is chosen. It goes without saying that any permanent impact to our property in the form of reduced acreage and driveway space would reduce our home's market value and resale price.

My opposition to Alternatives 5 is guided by more than mere self-interest. It is clear that the relocation of the existing southbound 16th Street ramp would be tied to making greater accommodations for bicyclists in the form of new travel lanes or cycle tracks on Georgia Avenue. I do not see a demonstrated need for such accommodations. I found no data in the planning study that shows the extent to which bicycle-related accidents have been a significant problem in the project area. Has any such data been compiled? My wife and I enjoy bicycling in the area, including Georgia Avenue. Using the existing bicyclist and pedestrian bridge in combination with neighborhood streets and sidewalks, we have never experienced a problem or inconvenience in safely navigating within the project area. Beyond the bicyclist issue, Alternative 5 construction will most assuredly have an adverse impact on both north and south bound 16th Street vehicle traffic, especially during rush hour.

Recognizing that everything cost money, I think it is incumbent upon the State to distinguish between those alternatives that are absolutely necessary to achieve project goals and those that are simply nice things to do.

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

* Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Mr. Donald Williams
Ms. Audré Williams
9108 16th Street
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Ms. Williams:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 - Master Plan has been noted. We have also noted your opposition to Alternative 5. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team understands that construction activity may have a negative impact on traffic flow and could create an inconvenience to area residents. It is possible some temporary lane closures or temporary closures of access points may be necessary during construction. While Alternative 3 does not currently propose changes to the 16th Street intersection with Georgia Avenue, traffic patterns may still be affected during the construction of improvements should Alternative 3 be selected. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will develop a "maintenance of traffic" plan in coordination with Montgomery County. During the final design and construction phases, SHA will keep local residents and business owners/operators informed of any changes to traffic flow resulting from construction activities as they occur.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME EDWARD CALLAHAN **DATE** 12/4/2015

ADDRESS 1705 WHITE OAK DRIVE

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

We need a safe mechanism to cross Georgia Avenue between Forest Glen and Seminary.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [x] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : [x] **Add my name.** [ ] **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Mr. Edward Callahan
1705 White Oak Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Callahan:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. The addition of a potential traffic signal and pedestrian crossing at Flora Lane included in this option is intended to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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PLEASE PRINT

NAME Elizabeth Rogers **DATE** 11-17-15

ADDRESS 10106 Gladstone Street

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20902

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I think the cycle Track is a very good idea.
If it is developed well, then people will use it.
As a results the automobile traffic will decrease.
I just have a few questions:
① How will the cycle track begin ~~and~~ and end.
Will cyclists, be forced to move into heavy fast moving traffic? or will they need to stop and pickup their bikes to step onto a sidewalk? Or will there be a ramp to move onto a sidewalk or quite road?

② What barriers will be put up to prevent automobiles from bumping into cyclists at the entrances and exits of the shopping areas? Seems like a silly question, but motorists do not look for cyclists.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

March 9, 2016

Ms. Elizabeth Rogers
10106 Gladstone Street
Silver Spring MD 20902

Dear Ms. Rogers:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. The two-way Cycle Track option to Alternative 5 was developed to provide a bicycle facility along MD 97 that capitalizes on the existing bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the I-495 Capital Beltway interchange. Because the cycle track would be provided along the west, or southbound, side of MD 97, bicyclists travelling north on MD 97 would need to make a left turn to enter onto the cycle track. A proposed "bike box" would be provided at the MD 97 intersection with Seminary Road. The bike box is painted onto the northbound MD 97 approach to the intersection between the stop bar and the crosswalk. When MD 97 has a red light, bicyclists can cross in front of the stopped traffic, which allows them to turn left onto Seminary Road and into the cycle track from the left turn lane. In addition, the cycle track would cross several driveway entrances. At these driveway entrances, bicyclists in the cycle track would have the right-of-way over vehicles turning into or out of the driveways. The project team is evaluating the cycle track option and other alternatives to see how bicycle access can be accommodated.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410 545 8518, toll-free at 1 800 548-5026, or by e mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Elizabeth Peran **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 9509 Woodland Dr.

CITY S.S. **STATE** Md. **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

The Building next to the Gas Station where all the businesses are, will lose parking in front. Please put parking if you displace the Gas station called Amoco.

I suggest a parking garage where Staples is as the small businesses + apartments at 9433 Georgia will lose their parking in front of the building. This needs to be compensated for all those small restaurants + Bakery. What about deliveries? This will kill their businesses if you dont put in parking!!

I like the Flora Lane Light as I own a house behind the Calvary church and this has always been an issue and dangerous turn. I Like 5B. No Bikes too dangerous!!

MAILING LIST*: ☐ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 18, 2016

Ms. Elizabeth Peran
9509 Woodland Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Peran:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team understands the needs of businesses to maintain access for loading and unloading of equipment and goods. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will coordinate with property and business owners to ensure they have adequate space to accomplish their loading and unloading activities.

Similarly, the project team appreciates the concern of businesses owners and operators whose parking may be impacted by the alternatives under study. Where possible, the project team will seek to provide replacement parking on-site. Where parking cannot be replaced on-site, the project team is identifying potential locations for shared parking lots close to businesses impacted by a loss in the number of parking spaces. However, the exact locations and number of spaces to be provided will depend on which alternative is selected and which properties SHA acquires. The project team will continue to coordinate with business owners and operators as the project progresses.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Heather Lair **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 9219 Columbia Blvd.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I like many aspects of the alternatives I have seen tonight — a median on Georgia Ave (preferably tree lined); left turns @ rush hour; better sidewalks and reduced vehicle entrances + exits. I like the full closure of Columbia Blvd and the realignment of 16th Street South of the "wedge" (@ 16th + GA). I love the cycle track and planting options! I appreciate your ~~effo~~ careful consideration of neighborhood input and am excited for positive change along the Georgia Ave. Corridor. Thank you!

PS - my favorite option is 5 / Cycle Track.

MAILING LIST*: ☐ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Ms. Heather Lair
9219 Columbia Boulevard
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Lair:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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PLEASE PRINT

NAME JACQUELYN SMITH **DATE** 12-10-15

ADDRESS 2412 Homestead Dr.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20902

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Highlights –
My order of priorities:
1) Traffic flow – ie., 4 lanes north at least during rush hour
2) Sidewalks w/ buffers from traffic
3) Bike lanes

I chose Alt. 2 because it's the only one that insures 4 lanes north during rush hour. Even now traffic sometimes backs up to Spring St. Putting in a median strip is a mistake and benefits only local residents and not the rest of the county tax payers who use Georgia Ave.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☒ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 18, 2016

Ms. Jacquelyn Smith
2412 Homestead Drive
Silver Spring MD 20902

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 2 – Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) is noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Improvements proposed through this project are not expected to increase traffic capacity along Georgia Avenue. However, by modifying lane alignments and adjusting signal timing, traffic flow may be improved during peak travel periods. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Janice Zalen **DATE** 12-6-2015

ADDRESS 9518 Clement Road

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

① Columbia Blvd, which becomes Dale Drive backs up in morning rush hour really badly because the intersection at Georgia & Seminary Road / Columbia Blvd is completely blocked by the traffic turning left onto GA from Seminary Road. This did not seem to be addressed in any of the alternatives, yet it is a very serious problem for those of us who must take Dale Dr. to get to GA avenue & out of our neighborhood.

② Please, please lengthen the time for pedestrians to cross Georgia Ave. I love to walk, but there is not enough time to get across Georgia Ave, so I end up driving.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☑ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 18, 2016

Ms. Janice Zalen
9518 Clement Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Zalen:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team has noted your concern about traffic on Columbia Boulevard approaching the Georgia Avenue intersection in the AM peak period. For each alternative, all traffic signals along Georgia Avenue have been coordinated to provide a smoother movement along the corridor. By coordinating the traffic signals, less stoppage and intersection blockage would occur along the Georgia Avenue corridor. These would allow left-turning and through moving vehicles from Seminary Road/Columbia Boulevard and other intersecting roadways to Georgia Avenue clear faster.

For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time. In addition, raised medians would be installed with Alternatives 3 and 5 to provide a controlled barrier between directional traffic and areas of safety should pedestrians need additional time crossing Georgia Avenue.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME GUL NAWAZ **DATE** NOV 20, 2015

ADDRESS 9475 GEORGIA AVE

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [x] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Gul Nawaz
9475 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Nawaz:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 1 – No Build has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

January 4, 2016

Jillian W. Downs
9412 Woodland Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Jeremy Beck
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
MD State Highway Administration
707 N Calvert Street MS C-301
Baltimore, MD 21298-6521

Dear Mr. Beck:

I commend the planning team for presenting the public with a thorough summary of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study to date along with thoughtful alternatives for consideration. I am the homeowner at **9412 Woodland Drive**, which lies at the center top of each of the planning maps, and so my stake in this project is immense. Due to its close proximity, Georgia Avenue already impacts my home and property, and will continue to do so, no matter which alternative is selected in the end. While I fully support the purpose of the proposed project, my primary interest is in lessening future negative impacts on my own home and property. My top concerns are:

- Buffer - While the BP filling station is not an ideal neighbor, its building currently serves as the buffer between my home and property and the traffic mayhem on Georgia Avenue. Planning alternatives 3, 5, 5B, and 5 Cycle Track displace the BP station, exposing my home and property to an encroaching highway. If the BP station is displaced, what use of the property is intended? Whether new construction, parking, or greenspace, it is imperative residents of Woodland Drive be provided with a substantial buffer, which might include a privacy wall and/or screening trees. It is also worth noting, residents of Woodland Drive use the current alleyway to access our properties, and we must be assured continued access no matter what happens to commercial properties along Georgia Avenue.
- Noise - Residents of Woodland Drive already endure unsatisfactory levels of traffic noise because of Georgia Avenue. Any increase to noise levels, even during the build of the project, will negatively impact our ability to enjoy our properties, and is, therefore, of utmost concern.
- Encroaching pollution - Related to the points above, planning alternatives 3, 5, 5B, and 5 Cycle Track would all appear to bring the Georgia Avenue corridor and LOD buffer closer to my home and property. I am concerned about any future sustained increase in air and noise pollution from this shift.

- Cut-through traffic - I would oppose any plan which leads to an increase in cut-through traffic on Woodland Drive. How would a new stoplight at Flora (alternatives 3, 5B, and 5 Cycle Track) impact traffic on my street and in the Woodside Forest neighborhood?
- Construction impacts - For many years, my house has been subjected to vibrations when large vehicles pass over dips, potholes, and grates on Georgia Avenue. I am concerned about what further negative impact on the structure of my home could occur during the course of this project.
- Property value - While recognizing an improved Georgia Avenue corridor would enhance the neighborhood overall, I am concerned about a potential negative impact to my own property due to proximity to the project build area, potential encroachment of the corridor, and other aforementioned concerns.

Should a build alternative be selected in the end of the planning process, and should my concerns be negated, I look forward to someday experiencing a Georgia Avenue that includes an attractive and pedestrian-friendly, tree-lined median; wide, tree-lined sidewalks; thriving neighborhood-friendly businesses; calm traffic, and easy pedestrian access from the northeast side of Georgia to the Forest Glen Metro station. The plan alternatives most closely matching these outcomes seem to be 3 or 5B.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide comments. Please keep me informed.

Sincerely,

Jillian W. Downs
301-328-7642
jilliandowns@gmail.com

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

March 7, 2016

Ms. Jillian W. Downs
9412 Woodland Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Downs:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 and Alternative 5 with Option B has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

While SHA owns approximately 100 feet of right-of-way within the study limits along the Georgia Avenue corridor, additional property will be needed for all Alternatives other than the "No-Build" Alternative. Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. Where a business is displaced, the remainder of the parcel not needed for roadway widening could be used for supporting transportation uses, such as stormwater management and/or parking replacement. If a portion of the property is deemed not needed for transportation use, it could be offered back to the original owner or sold for redevelopment. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the project is funded for final design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detailed design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requests of the detailed design, while minimizing impact to personal property or the public.

An analysis of traffic noise impacts from the project has been conducted based on the 2011 SHA highway noise policy and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) highway noise regulation (23CFR772). Given the similarity of the project's build alternatives, overall noise impact is considered basically the same for any of these alternatives. A total of 31 separate land use areas were identified in the project area; 20 are considered noise-sensitive. Of the 20, five areas were identified as impacted. Noise barriers have been found to be feasible and reasonable at four of the impacted areas. Further study of all impacted noise-sensitive areas is ongoing; when an alternative has been selected and the project enters the design phase, coordination with the affected property owners and residents will be conducted.

The primary purpose for placing the potential traffic signal at the intersection of Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane is to provide the Woodside Forest community easier access to both directions of Georgia Avenue and a safe connection for pedestrians and bicyclists trying to reach destinations west of Georgia Avenue. Placement of the traffic signal would mainly benefit residents living in the Woodside Forest community north of Seminary Road/Columbia Boulevard. Currently motorists in the Woodside Forest community can only access Georgia Avenue southbound at Seminary Road during peak hours of travel. The potential Flora Lane traffic signal would provide a second point of access to Georgia Avenue. In addition, to safely cross Georgia Avenue pedestrians and bicyclists must travel to Seminary Place, sometimes in the opposite direction of their intended destination. The potential traffic signal at Flora Lane would provide a safe and more direct path. While cut-through traffic can never totally be stopped except by completely closing a roadway, the intersection of Georgia Avenue at Seminary Road is still the most direct route to Georgia Avenue for those in your community living south of Columbia Boulevard.

The project team understands that construction activity may have a negative impact on traffic flow and could create an inconvenience to area residents. It is possible some temporary lane closures or temporary closures of access points may be necessary during construction. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will develop a "maintenance of traffic" plan in coordination with Montgomery County. During the construction phase, SHA will keep local residents and business owners/operators informed of any changes to traffic flow resulting from construction activities as they occur.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME John Rossetti **DATE** 12-24-15

ADDRESS 1701 White Oak Drive

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

According to the SHA representatives who spoke at the December 1, 2015 Public Hearing at Blair High School, one of goals of the improvement to Georgia Avenue - between Forest Glen Road and 16th Street (Ga. Ave) - is to support mass transit use. Presently, my neighborhood, which is bounded by Ga. Ave, Dale Drive, Route 29, and the Capital Beltway (Beltway), has very poor, and, in fact, dangerous access to the Forest Glen Metro – about .7 miles from my house. Walking north/south on the east side of Ga. Ave is akin to playing a game of "Frogger" when trying to cross at the entrance and exit ramps to the Beltway.

The pedestrian bridge that provides easy and safe access to the Forest Glen Metro for residents who live on the west side of Ga. Ave provides no practical benefit to the residents who live on the east side of Ga. Ave. To access that bridge, resident of my neighborhood would have to walk south on Ga. Ave and cross at either Seminary Place of Columbia Blvd. They then would walk north on GA. Ave to the pedestrian bridge. Depending on the timing of the lights, the walk south to walk north would add about 10-15 minutes on what should be a 10 minute walk to the Forest Glen Metro. Thus, of primary concern to me and the other residents of my neighborhood is that the Ga. Ave project include a crosswalk on Ga. Ave that makes metro access much easier and safer.

Accordingly, I, along with the other residents of my neighborhood, strongly support the Ga. Ave improvement proposals that include a pedestrian crosswalk at Flora Lane (Alternative 3, 5B with Flora Lane Intersection, or 5 with Cycle Track). This crosswalk would provide pedestrians with safe and easy access to the pedestrian bridge and the Forest Glen Metro. Failing to include a crosswalk at Flora Lane would be a grave disservice to mass transit and my neighborhood, as well as fail to achieve one of the main goals of this project.

Thank you for consideration of my comments.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☒ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Mr. John Rossetti
1701 White Oak Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Rossetti:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan, Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection and Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. The project team also notes your concern about improving access from the east side of Georgia Avenue to the existing pedestrian/bicyclist bridge. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Jeremy Beck

From: joel_iams@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 2:00 AM
To: Jeremy Beck
Subject: PLC - Project MO224_11 - Web user comments

---- **Automated Web Project Life Cycle Notice(PLC.PROD.SHA - 1) ----**

A) Communication address :-

Mr.Joel Iams
1224 Dale Drive
Silver Spring MD, 20910

B) Mailing list options :-

C) Other information :-

I am impacted by this project I am a resident of Maryland I am Traveling Public

D) Comments/Inquiries :-

I want to express my support for the Alternative 5 plans displayed last week at Montgomery Blair High School. The inclusion of bicycle lanes (5A, 5B) represents an important step in improving the commuting experience for local residents. The bicycle track (5C) is a particularly forward-thinking element, and the one that I am most in favor of. I also want to express support for adjusting the intersection of MD-97 and Forest Glen Road. The pedestrian traffic associated with the Metro station and Holy Cross Hospital is at extreme risk due to the lack of a protected passage across MD-97. A tunnel or bridge would reduce the number of pedestrian casualties and the number of traffic jams due to injured or killed pedestrians at that dangerous intersection.

Jeremy Beck

From: Jeremy Beck
Sent: Monday, February 29, 2016 10:01 AM
To: 'joel_iams@yahoo.com'
Cc: Christina Brandt
Subject: MD 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study

Dear Mr. Iams:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team has noted your support for the Cycle Track option. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

Your suggestion that a pedestrian tunnel crossing Georgia Avenue at the Forest Glen Metro entrance be included as a component of this project has been noted. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), in conjunction with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) completed a feasibility study of pedestrian tunnel and bridge concepts in 2013. As shown at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing, the current scope of this project does not include the potential pedestrian tunnel. SHA will, however, coordinate with MCDOT and WMATA to raise this concern, which was identified by multiple residents to investigate how the pedestrian tunnel effort may be advanced.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by email at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-545-8518 / 800-548-5026
www.roads.maryland.gov
Follow us on Twitter @MDSHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Joseph Nason **DATE** 11/12/2015

ADDRESS 9810 McMillan Ave

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

The intersection of Georgia Ave and Forest Glen Rd is extremely dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. It is very important to make this area more pedestrian friendly. Setting a seperate bike lane will not only make it safer for pedestrians, but also keep the cars away from the pedestrians. I can think of many examples where cars are traveling too fast on Georgia ave and come very close to the sidewalk -- putting bus riders (waiting at the stop) at risk.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 16, 2016

Mr. Joseph Nason
9810 McMillan Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Nason:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team has noted your support for improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations at the Georgia Avenue intersection with Forest Glen Road. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME JASON PIOTROWSKI **DATE** 11/13/2015

ADDRESS 10622 Georgia AVE

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20902

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

It's a shame that none of the alternatives address the turn lane for south-bound Georgia Ave @ Forest Glen Rd & the entrance to I-495, as this whole section is a real jam w/ the turn lane on S.B. Georgia Ave being for both entrances. Anyway, from your descriptions, I decided I liked Alternate #5 w/ cycle track because as a bicycle commuter, I've noticed that most driver do not know how to pass a cyclist safely, and so any option in tha busy section thas has cyclists in the same lane as cars, especially turning ones, is dangerous. Plus, in this alternative I like tha both turn signal lights ~~on the~~ south of I-495 on Georgia Ave are eliminated as they currently cause bottle-necks. I also like in this alternative that the entrance/exit to 16th ST. are at 1 place and not divided as currently.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes South-bound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 24, 2016

Mr. Jason Piotrowski
10622 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20902

Dear Mr. Piotrowski:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Mr + Mrs Joseph P. Warner **DATE** Nov 16, 2015

ADDRESS 9414 Woodland Drive

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910-1450

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

With plans 3 & 5 what wall or Buffer will be between our property and Georgia Avenue? We are afraid the level of noise will be overwhelming.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☑ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☑ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

March 21, 2016

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph P. Warner
9414 Woodland Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Warner:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 2 has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

An analysis of traffic noise impacts from the project has been conducted based on the 2011 SHA highway noise policy and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) highway noise regulation (23CFR772). Given the similarity of the project's build alternatives, overall noise impact is considered basically the same for any of these alternatives. A total of 31 separate land use areas were identified in the project area; 20 are considered noise-sensitive. Of the 20, five areas were identified as impacted. Noise barriers have been found to be feasible and reasonable at four of the impacted areas. However, the location of your residence is not forecast to be impacted. The noise analysis takes into account structures that would be displaced by the proposed Georgia Avenue widening. Further study of all impacted noise-sensitive areas is ongoing; when an alternative has been selected and the project enters the design phase, coordination with the affected property owners and residents will be conducted.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410 545 8518, toll-free at 1 800 548-5026, or by e mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME JOHN MANOUGIAN **DATE** 11-19-2015

ADDRESS 8720 GEORGIA AVE #204

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

The Master Plan offers the best alternative to move traffic during peak hours + provides for traffic increases over the coming years.

John Manougian

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☑ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. John Manougian
8720 Georgia Avenue #204
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Manougian:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Joshua A. Gershone **DATE** 12/01/2015
ADDRESS 17006 Lansdowne Way
CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

PLEASE address these questions:

1. Why do Tables 2 + 3 appear to contradict each other? (with regard to auto LOS) ALL options make auto traffic worse than the No-Build options — so where is the supposed improved auto access?

2. How does the TSM/TDM option make LOS so much worse than the No-Build option, when the # + layout of lanes does not change?

3. What are the error/uncertainty bars on the Table 2 LOS delay numbers?

Thank you!

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.** (already on list)

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Joshua Gershone
1706 Lansdowne Way
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Gershone:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Table 2 and Table 3 in the public hearing brochure reflect different types of information concerning each of the alternatives. Table 2 shows the actual signalized intersection Level of Service (LOS) letter designation and delay in seconds. Table 3 compares each of the alternatives relative to each other, in an effort to establish a balance between modes of transportation, safety and connectivity in the Montgomery Hills community. The scores given to each alternative in Table 3 reflect a summary of factors including LOS, travel times, traffic delay at multiple locations, traffic signal needs, the effectiveness of prioritizing transit and accessibility from side streets. Points were given to each of alternates in the described categories. The total for each of the alternatives in Table 3 were then adjusted to fix a scale ranging from 1 to 5.

Alternative 2 shows a worse LOS than the No-Build Alternative at some intersections along Georgia Avenue because it allows for left turn movements from Georgia Avenue onto Forest Glen Road and Seminary Road/Columbia Boulevard, which results in traffic queuing at the intersections. The queuing from the intersections is cumulative and extends the length of the corridor, which could degrade traffic operation along Georgia Avenue. In addition, Alternative 2 includes traffic signal prioritization for transit vehicles. Due to the number of buses estimated to be in operation during the peak hours of travel, the cumulative signal cycle time given to buses coupled with the heavy volume of traffic also contributes to the degradation of traffic operations along Georgia Avenue.

The Level of Service (LOS) on Table 2 in the brochure is calculated for signalized intersections only. The dash line (-) in the table represents locations were no traffic signals exist or are proposed for each of the alternatives.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Jeremy Beck

From: jason.5001@outlook.com
Sent: Monday, December 07, 2015 2:00 AM
To: Jeremy Beck
Subject: PLC - Project MO224_11 - Web user comments

---- **Automated Web Project Life Cycle Notice(PLC.PROD.SHA - 1) ----**

A) Communication address :-

Mr.Jason Weaver
2131 Clark Pl
Silver Spring MD, 20910

B) Mailing list options :-

Please ADD me to your mailing list
C) Other information :-

I am impacted by this project I am a resident of Maryland I am Traveling Public

D) Comments/Inquiries :-

I believe that Alternative 3 will be the best use of space and provide the best sense of place for the community. Unless there are plans to add bicycle lane connections at the north and south ends of the project limits, I believe that bike lanes directly on Georgia Ave are not in the best interest of the community. Without other connections, bicycle lanes along Georgia would be an island and have limited utility. Bicycles would be better accommodated along the neighborhood streets as they are north of the project limits and improvements to bicycle infrastructure would be better along neighborhood streets. Along with Alternative 3, I believe southbound 16th St. should be realigned next to northbound 16th St. to help calm traffic and discourage drivers from going fast along the highway off-ramp style turn that currently exists on 16th St. southbound. If at all possible, I would like to see an eastern Forest Glen Metro entrance added in conjunction with this project. This would greatly improve pedestrian safety in the community. Coordination with Metro on the potential redevelopment of the Forest Glen Metro parking lot will also aid in the success of the Georgia Ave project. Thank you to the entire team working on this project. Your efforts are appreciated and I look forward to the community improving from this project.

Jeremy Beck

From: Jeremy Beck
Sent: Monday, February 29, 2016 10:07 AM
To: 'jason.5001@outlook.com'
Cc: Christina Brandt
Subject: MD 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study

Dear Mr. Weaver:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 has been noted. We have also noted your support for relocating southbound 16th Street to connect to Georgia Avenue at the northbound 16th Street intersection. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Although no on-road bicycle facilities are currently provided along Georgia Avenue, bicycle use on Georgia Avenue is legal and some bicyclists do ride along the Georgia Avenue corridor. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The project team notes that Montgomery County's bicycle master plan recommends providing bicycle improvements on the local roadway network instead of along Georgia Avenue. Alternative 3 is consistent with this plan. However, SHA's bicycle policy states that on-road bicycle facilities should be considered wherever possible; therefore, the other build alternatives propose some on-road bicycle improvements. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

Your suggestion that a pedestrian tunnel crossing Georgia Avenue at the Forest Glen Metro entrance be included as a component of this project has been noted. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), in conjunction with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) completed a feasibility study of pedestrian tunnel and bridge concepts in 2013. As shown at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing, the current scope of this project does not include the potential pedestrian tunnel. SHA will, however, coordinate with MCDOT and WMATA to raise this concern, which was identified by multiple residents to investigate how the pedestrian tunnel effort may be advanced.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by email at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
Maryland State Highway Administration

410-545-8518 / 800-548-5026
www.roads.maryland.gov
Follow us on Twitter @MDSHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME KEN DUCKSON **DATE** 12/12/2015

ADDRESS GEORGIA AVE SILVER SPRING

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

MR BECK

MY QUESTION IS WHO IS BEING PAID OFF YOUR PLANS SHOW MANY LOCATION BEING RE MOVED BUT THE ONE CAUSING 90% OF ISSUE IS GIVING LAND WHAT GIVES COULD IT BE PROP. OWNER IS RELATED OR IS RONAE KRAMER MEMBER OF THE SENATE.

1 CAR WAS DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH ROOM TO BE THERE NO ENTRANCE (USING GEORGIA AVE AS STAGGING AREA)

2 NO EXIT FOR WASH (BLOCKING LANES TO EXIT) BACKING TRAFFIC PAST BELTWAY / ON BELTWAY ECT... FIX ISSUE ~ DONT GIVE POCKETS

GOVERNMENT GEED AT ITS BEST

THERE SHOULD HAVE NEVER BEEN PERMIT ISSUED FOR CAR WASH

KRAMERS SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED... ALONG WITH SHA

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 5, 2016

Mr. Ken Duckson
No Address Provided

Dear Mr. Duckson:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Your concerns regarding property displacements are noted. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. When the properties and type of impacts are determined, the information is then presented to the public using alternative maps at public involvement events and various publications for comments. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the alternate is funded for detail design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detail design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requests of the detail design, while minimizing impact to personal property of the public.

Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. The build alternatives would impact between 42-44 properties. The majority of the potential property impacts are limited to parking areas and driveways. Where possible, SHA will attempt to mitigate impacts to parking spaces. In all cases, property owners will receive just compensation for the property to be acquired.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Julie Morris **DATE** 11/13/15

ADDRESS

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP**

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Highly opposed to Options 1 + 2. No build is dangerous. Proposed sidewalk in roadway north of 495 and maintenance of signalized reversible lane dangerous.

It is highly desirable to keep the signal on northbound 97 just prior to the off ramp from 495 to help drivers navigate the congested merge off the tricky outdated ramp by periodically stopping traffic to allow safer merging. Also traffic backing up on this tight ramp is unsafe.

I support closing the parking lot entrance as in option 5 because there are too many driveways too close between Seminary Place shopping Center and 16th Street.

I strongly support a proposed grass median buffer. I am not fully supportive of bikes sharing the roadway in this area. A seperate bike path and pedestrian path is desirable even if it creates some property displacements.

For these reasons I am in favor of a mix of Alt 3 and Alt 5B.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☑ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- OR
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 5, 2016

Ms. Julie Morris
No Address Provided

Dear Ms. Morris:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 - Master Plan and Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. The project team has also noted your recommendation that the traffic light on northbound MD 97 prior to the off-ramp from I-495 be retained. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Your concerns regarding bikes sharing the roadway in this area are noted. Although no on-road bicycle facilities are currently provided along Georgia Avenue, bicycle use on Georgia Avenue is legal and some bicyclists do ride along the Georgia Avenue corridor. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The project team notes that Montgomery County's bicycle master plan recommends providing bicycle improvements on the local roadway network instead of along Georgia Avenue. Alternative 3 is consistent with this plan. However, SHA's bicycle policy states that on-road bicycle facilities should be considered wherever possible; therefore, the other build alternatives propose some on-road bicycle improvements. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Jim Barr **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 1905 Hanover St

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I would be very pleased if 16th St North and South were brought together. This will reduce speeds of cars at the current 16th St racetrack going South from Georgia avenue. Sidewalks on both sides of 16th Street and on the re-claimed Columbia Blvd would make things safer for pedestrians.

Please also close Columbia Blvd at Seminary Drive. People use Columbia to avoid the traffic light at Georgia ave and they speed dangerously fast on Columbia toward 16th Street.

Closing 16th Street would give my neighbor parking by his house and reduce headlights and noise at my house and my neighbor's houses. The vacant island in the middle of 16th St could become a park.

Thank you for the recent improvements to the crosswalk at Snider's. I can now let my children walk to Sniders on their own. It is much safer now.

MAILING LIST*: ☒ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 18, 2016

Mr. Jim Barr
1905 Hanover Street
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Barr:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5, which includes a proposed closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Road and realignment of southbound 16th Street, has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

We are pleased to hear that the crosswalk recently completed by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation on Seminary Road at Sutton Place has improved pedestrian access and safety. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Mr. Andrew Bossi, Senior Planning Specialist, Montgomery County DOT
Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Lynne Mogilensky **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 1902 Rockwood Rd.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

If Columbia Blvd. is closed at Seminary Rd. either before or after entrance to Exxon station, there will be ~~more traffic~~ no less traffic cutting through Columbia Blvd. southbound to get to 16th St. southbound. Instead of some turning right from eastbound Seminary Rd. to Columbia Blvd. (to 16th St.) and some turning onto Sutton → Rockwood → Columbia, all of it will take the Sutton - Rockwood - Columbia route.

MAILING LIST*: ☐ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Ms. Lynne Mogliensky
1902 Rookwood Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Mogliensky:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your concern about the potential closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Place has been noted. The proposed closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Place is intended to improve traffic safety and operations due to this intersection's current proximity to the Seminary Place intersection with Georgia Avenue. While cut-through traffic can never totally be stopped except by completely closing a roadway, the project team will continue to evaluate the traffic impacts of the potential closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Place before identifying a preferred alternative for the project. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME LAURIE M. TRIPPETT **DATE** 11.30.15

ADDRESS 1532 LIVE OAK DR.

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

HOW WOULD TRAFFIC CONGESTION BE EASED W/ALT. 5, Cycle Track?

PLEASE ADDRESS THE TIMING OF THE TRAFFIC LIGHT @ GEORGIA AND SEMINARY / DALE DRIVE / COLUMBIA BLVD!!

HOW WILL ANY OF THE ALTERNATIVES ADDRESS "SENSE OF PLACE?"

INCLUDE A PRELIMINARY TIME LINE (GRAPHIC) AND TIMING + DESCRIPTION OF "NEXT STEPS."

WHAT WILL REPLACE "DISPLACED" STRUCTURES. IF IT'S "TBD" - SAY SO!

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one) 3

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☒ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Ms. Laurie M. Trippett
1532 Live Oak Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Trippett:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan is noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Improvements proposed through this project are not expected to increase traffic capacity along Georgia Avenue. However, by modifying lane alignments and adjusting signal timing, traffic flow may be improved during peak travel periods. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

The project seeks to balance transportation needs within Montgomery Hills by minimizing the number of locations where crashes could occur, promoting safety within the project limits by providing features that accommodate all roadway users, and enhancing the appearance of the project corridor by including landscape features. The alternatives include access management strategies to limit the number of driveways along Georgia Avenue. In addition, the alternatives include improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle facilities. Lastly, landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along MD 97 to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the final design phase of the project.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Laurence Krupnak **DATE** Dec 1, 2015

ADDRESS 1711 Corwin Drive

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** Md **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Corwin Dr. is a one-lane street because patrons of the drycleaning factory and of woodside Deli and of the wigshop and of the spa and homeowners park cars on both sides of Corwin Drive. The roadway gets very very high traffic due to cut-throughs and by patrons of cited businesses. Corwin Drive will completely bog down if more traffic is generated by persons seeking parking spaces at a proposed parking lot at the end of Corwin Drive.

I have no preference for any plan since I plan to move out of the area because the traffic on the street has gone up significantly since the time I moved to area in 1979.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Mr. Laurence Krupnak
1711 Corwin Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Krupnak:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

We understand your frustration with the growth of traffic in the area. Your concern about traffic impacts to your neighborhood from the potential parking lot at Corwin Drive, as proposed under some of the alternatives, is noted. Corwin Drive is owned by Montgomery County; therefore, any plan to modify Corwin Drive would have to be approved by the County. To prevent traffic impacts on the adjacent residential community, if a parking lot is built, Corwin Drive would "dead-end" at the parking lot. This would prevent cut-through traffic from entering the parking lot from Georgia Avenue and continuing along Corwin Drive through the residential community. This is consistent with the Montgomery Hills master plan, which recommends closing Corwin Drive at Georgia Avenue.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME M.K. Johnson **DATE** 12/1/15

ADDRESS 2203 Kimball Place, Silver Spring

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910-1165

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☒ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. M. K. Johnson
2203 Kimball Place
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5–Four Lanes Southbound and Three to Four Lanes Northbound has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Marshall Van de Wynpoele **DATE** 18 Nov 2015

ADDRESS 1800 Locust Grove Rd

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

My preference is in the following order:

(1) Alternative #2

(2) Alternative #1 - No build

(3) Alternative #5

I urge you not to add another stoplight to Georgia ave. I am very happy the gas stations are being displaced but I cannot understand why the carwash, which is responsible for many issues on Georgia ave, is being kept.

Placing the cars going to the carwash ~~in~~ through the CVS parking lot will have a large number of cars idling right near many of our back yards at Locust Grove Homeowner Associations homes. I also urge you to please not allow this either ~~or~~ as it will result in a lot more air pollution near our homes or at least consider purchasing our homes to solve the problem

MAILING LIST*: ☒ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 18, 2016

Mr. Marshall Van de Wyngaerde
1800 Locust Grove Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Van de Wyngaerde:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your preference for three Alternatives, in descending order is noted as follows: Alternative 2, Alternative 1, and Alternative 5. The project team has also noted your concern about additional traffic signals along Georgia Avenue. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team has noted your concerns that providing access to the car wash through the CVS parking lot could negatively impact residents living in Locust Grove. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. When the properties and type of impacts are determined, the information is then presented to the public using alternative maps at public involvement events and various publications for comments. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the project is funded for final design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detailed design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requirements of the detailed design, while minimizing impact to personal property or the public.

Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. The build alternatives would impact between 42-44 properties. The majority of the potential property impacts are limited to parking areas and driveways. Where possible, SHA will attempt to mitigate impacts to parking spaces. In all cases, property owners will receive just compensation for the property to be acquired.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME

DATE 12/2/2015

ADDRESS *Marian Callahan*
1705 White Oak Dr.
Silver Spring, MD 20910-1447

CITY **STATE** **ZIP**

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

We are a family of 2 seniors and an adult, living at the above address for 35 years.

1) We find it impossible to cross Georgia Avenue in the current 8-second time. Therefore, we take the car although our destination Sniders Market is but two blocks away.

2) We cannot walk 1/4 mile to Metro as it is unsafe both to cross Georgia to reach the pedestrian walkway and alternatively to cross Beltway ramps.

This condition adds to traffic congestion, unnecessarily.

3) The stretch of stores on Georgia between White Oak Drive and Columbia must be rehabbed or torn down — get rid of "vape" shop and consider pedestrian safety.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Ms. Marian Callahan
1705 White Oak Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Callahan:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. The addition of a potential traffic signal and pedestrian crossing at Flora Lane included in this option is intended to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue.

For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME MAE NOVAK DATE 12/3/15
ADDRESS 9537 CLEMENT RD
CITY SILVER SPRING STATE MD ZIP 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

KEEP BIKES OFF GEORGIA AVE IN BOTH DIRECTIONS — FOREST GLEN TO SEMINARY DALE.

I THINK ADDING ANOTHER LIGHT AT FLORA WILL HELP PEDESTRIANS & BICYCLISTS BUT ~~THE~~ DRIVERS WILL CUT THROUGH TO GET ONTO GA AVE NORTHBOUND AT FLORA AND CREATE EVEN WORSE JAMS IN THE AFTERNOON COMMUTE. TRYING TO GET ONTO GA AVE NORTHBOUND AT THE SEMINARY RD INTERSECTION IS A NIGHTMARE MORNINGS & SOME EVENINGS. ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC ENTERING AT FLORA WILL MAKE THAT WORSE

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [x] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : [ ] **Add my name.** [ ] **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 24, 2016

Ms. Mae Novak
9537 Clement Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Novak:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. In addition, your concerns that providing a potential traffic signal on Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane could negatively affect traffic flow will be evaluated by the project team prior to identifying a preferred alternative.

The project team has noted your recommendation to prohibit bicycle use along Georgia Avenue. Although no on-road bicycle facilities are currently provided along Georgia Avenue, bicycle use on Georgia Avenue is legal and some bicyclists do ride along the Georgia Avenue corridor. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The project team notes that Montgomery County's bicycle master plan recommends providing bicycle improvements on the local roadway network instead of along Georgia Avenue. Alternative 3 is consistent with this plan. However, SHA's bicycle policy states that on-road bicycle facilities should be considered wherever possible; therefore, the other build alternatives propose some on-road bicycle improvements. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Mary Vassel **DATE** Nov. 21. 2015

ADDRESS 1713 Black Oak Lane

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I believe Alt. 5 option B to be the best. The Flora Lane intersection is sorely needed.

Safety for Pedestrians is really important. We need that light and crosswalk - to get into and out of the Woodside Forest neighborhood.

Thank you for doing this project!

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Ms. Mary Vasse
1713 Black Oak Lane
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Vasse:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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ASE PRINT

NAME Tracy McGuire-Rossetti **DATE** 12-24-15

ADDRESS 1701 White Oak Drive

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

According to the SHA representatives who spoke at the December 1, 2015 Public Hearing at Blair High School, one of goals of the improvement to Georgia Avenue - between Forest Glen Road and 16th Street (Ga. Ave) - is to support mass transit use. Presently, my neighborhood, which is bounded by Ga. Ave, Dale Drive, Route 29, and the Capital Beltway (Beltway), has very poor, and, in fact, dangerous access to the Forest Glen Metro – about .7 miles from my house. Walking north/south on the east side of Ga. Ave is akin to playing a game of "Frogger" when trying to cross at the entrance and exit ramps to the Beltway.

The pedestrian bridge that provides easy and safe access to the Forest Glen Metro for residents who live on the west side of Ga. Ave provides no practical benefit to the residents who live on the east side of Ga. Ave. To access that bridge, resident of my neighborhood would have to walk south on Ga. Ave and cross at either Seminary Place of Columbia Blvd. They then would walk north on GA. Ave to the pedestrian bridge. Depending on the timing of the lights, the walk south to walk north would add about 10-15 minutes on what should be a 10 minute walk to the Forest Glen Metro. Thus, of primary concern to me and the other residents of my neighborhood is that the Ga. Ave project include a crosswalk on Ga. Ave that makes metro access much easier and safer.

Accordingly, I, along with the other residents of my neighborhood, strongly support the Ga. Ave improvement proposals that include a pedestrian crosswalk at Flora Lane (Alternative 3, 5B with Flora Lane Intersection, or 5 with Cycle Track). This crosswalk would provide pedestrians with safe and easy access to the pedestrian bridge and the Forest Glen Metro. Failing to include a crosswalk at Flora Lane would be a grave disservice to mass transit and my neighborhood, as well as fail to achieve one of the main goals of this project.

Thank you for consideration of my comments.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☒ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Ms. Tracy McGuire-Rossetti
1701 White Oak Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. McGuire-Rossetti:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan, Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection and Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. The project team also notes your concern about improving access from the east side of Georgia Avenue to the existing pedestrian/bicyclist bridge. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME MARTHA VERA **DATE** 11-12-15

ADDRESS 2012 LANIER DR

CITY SS **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Ms. Martha Vera
2012 Lanier Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Vera:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME MARTIN CZIGLER **DATE** 13 NOV 15

ADDRESS 10430 INWOOD AVE.

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20902

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I'M ENCOURAGED BY THESE PLANS, AND THINK THEY COULD MAKE A BIG IMPROVEMENT IN AN AREA THAT'S OTHERWISE SO CHAOTIC THAT WE AVOID DRIVING THROUGH IT.

I'M MOST IN FAVOUR OF ALTERNATIVE 5 - CYCLE TRACK. EVEN THOUGH I'M TOO OLD AND WEAK TO BIKE MYSELF, THE NEXT GENERATION THAT MOVES INTO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE. I ENCOURAGE SPENDING A LITTLE MORE AND BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE.

I UNDERSTAND THERE MIGHT BE ISSUES WITH PARKING. I HOPE BUSINESSES AND LANDOWNERS WILL STEP UP AND CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS NEW PARKING SOLUTIONS.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Martin Czigler
10430 Inwood Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20902

Dear Mr. Czigler:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

LERCH EARLY & BREWER
ideas that work

Attorneys at Law
3 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 460
Bethesda, MD 20814
www.lerchearly.com
William Kominers

Tel. (301) 841-3829
Fax (301) 347-1783
wkominers@lerchearly.com

December 1, 2015

VIA HAND DELIVERY AND REGULAR MAIL

Mr. Augustine Rebish
Deputy District Engineer
Maryland State Highway Administration
9300 Kenilworth Avenue
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770

RE: Seminary Place Shopping Center—December 1, 2015, Public Hearing on MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study (the "Project Study")

Dear Mr. Rebish:

This office represents the owners of the Seminary Place Shopping Center (the "Owners"). The Seminary Place Shopping Center is located on the west side of Georgia Avenue (MD Route 97), approximately two blocks south of the Capital Beltway (the "Center"). The location of the Center is shown outlined in red on the map attached to this letter.

The purpose of this letter is to place formally into the Record of the December 1, 2015, Public Hearing on the Project Study, the concerns the Owners have about the relationship between the Center and the impacts to the Center that are envisioned from the plans presented to date. As such, this letter represents a continuation of the ongoing dialogue between the Owners and the State Highway Administration ("SHA") concerning the Project Study and its impacts on the Center. Now that SHA has narrowed the field down to a short list of Alternatives (dated July 2015) (the "Alternatives"), for this hearing, the Owners desire to provide comments about the Alternatives and the effects that will occur to the Center. (We understand that SHA may have refined the Alternatives from those dated July 2015.)

Portions of the Center front on Georgia Avenue and also on Seminary Place. Portions of the Center are located immediately adjacent to, and wrap around, an existing Shell gas station (the "Gas Station") and an existing car wash (the "Car Wash"). Both the Car Wash and the Gas Station front directly onto Georgia Avenue and each has a separate curb cut for access to Georgia Avenue. At approximately three (3) acres, the Center is one of the largest properties in the area of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study.

The Center has a long history at this site, and is an integral component of the Montgomery Hills community. The retail uses in the Center, such as Staples and CVS, are uses that residents, nearby businesses, workers, and visitors to the area rely upon for many of their shopping needs. Without the Center, residents and businesses would be forced onto Georgia Avenue to travel either to downtown Wheaton or Silver Spring to shop.

Process Concerns

The Owners or their representatives have attended the many meetings held by SHA about the Project Study. But, despite the Owners expressing their opinions on numerous occasions since 2013, and providing factual information on conditions about the topography and ownership of the properties in question, the SHA continues to base its Alternatives on erroneous assumptions about the relationship of the Center and the Car Wash.

This major concern of the Owners, and an important reality in the SHA analysis, appears to have been ignored, and continues to remain a deficiency in the remaining Alternatives—planning for access over part of the Center in order to provide the sole replacement entry and stacking access for the Car Wash.

This proposed method of access to the Car Wash through the Center, along with possible changes to the actual access to the Center itself, will render the Center undesirable for its major tenants, CVS and Staples. This substantial economic impact would result in so great a diminution in value as to effectively result in a condemnation of the entire Center and all its uses. This would add significantly to the acquisition costs associated with the road improvement project.

As you move forward with the planning process, SHA's plans should be altered to reflect the concerns of the Owners and the realities of the properties. The SHA's continuing unilateral suggestion to use the Owners' property to provide access to the Car Wash is simply not acceptable. The adverse effects of SHA's proposed access will have a substantial economic impact that will severely diminish the value of the Center.

Alternatives (dated July 2015)

From the most recent stakeholder's meeting, the remaining Alternatives being considered are Alternatives 2, 3, 5 and 5C, as revised July 2015. These Alternatives were the subject of the Owners' review and comment.

Failures of the Proposed Alternatives

The Alternatives in the Project Study generally propose that the access points to the Center change, either in their existing locations or their current operational character.

Many of the Alternatives propose to affect the entrances from Georgia Avenue to the Car Wash and/or Gas Station. The Project Study then generally proposes to provide replacement access to one or both of these properties through the parking areas and drive aisles of the Center. **Neither the Gas Station nor the Car Wash are part of the Center, and neither are owned by the Owners.** This is the reason that each of these properties currently has its own curb cut for ingress and egress from/to Georgia Avenue.

The SHA expectation that future vehicular access and vehicle queing to serve the Car Wash or the Gas Station, or both, can occur on the property of the Center, is simply wrong, and must be corrected by SHA if the remaining Alternatives are to bear any relation to realty and to have any hope of fruition.

The implied expectation in these Alternative proposals that the Center "share" its parking areas and driveways with these adjacent properties is functionally unworkable. For at least two reasons the Center simply cannot realistically provide access to these other properties. First, the Alternatives ignore the significant grade change between the Center and the Car Wash and Gas Station properties. Second, and most important, the proposals ignore the different ownerships involved, and the fact that the Owners are not willing to subordinate any portion of the Center (their property) to provide access to these adjacent properties owned by others. The impacts that such an arrangement would have on: (i) the access to the Center; (ii) circulation within the Center; (iii) the number of parking spaces in the Center; and (iv) tenant uses and lease restrictions in the Center, make any such combination impossible.

The existing vehicle circulation patterns within the Center property would be dramatically impaired if additional traffic from the unrelated, adjacent properties were allowed to use the Center's property. Internal circulation routes would be severely affected. In addition, the impacts from the area that would need to be allocated to automobiles queuing for the Car Wash would impair circulation, block or eliminate parking, and generally interfere with use of the Center by patrons. Deliveries to these adjacent uses by large trucks would also impact use of the Center. The Center would have to lose existing parking spaces on its own property that serve its own uses, in order to "accommodate" the additional traffic and the changed circulation patterns to serve the neighboring properties.

As a result of the loss of parking, the Center could fall out of compliance with the statutory parking requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and possibly the requirements of its lender. The loss of parking spaces would also affect leases with tenants, as the available parking spaces are an element negotiated with tenants and incorporated into their leases. Damages may arise between the Owners and their tenants.

The Seminary Place entrance is very important and is now used, in part, for large delivery trucks, including tractor-trailers, to make deliveries to the retail uses in the Center. If those large delivery trucks cannot enter the Center from Seminary Place, there will be no way for such trucks to enter, because they will not be able to make a sharp right turn from Georgia Avenue into the Center. Even entering the Center at a new signal at the northern entrance will not help, because the tractor-trailer cannot adequately exit the site via Seminary Place and cannot turn

around within the site to return to exit at the new signal. Truck circulation must be analyzed in detail before making any decisions on a plan.

The potential for addition of a new signal at the northern entrance from Georgia Avenue could ease some of the entry maneuvers. But only with the understanding that there are no "time of day" restrictions on turns at that signal.

The Owners have raised many of these ownership and access issues from the early stages of public input into the Project Study. The Owners had hoped that the mutual interests of both the SHA and the Owners would have been served by having the potential impacts and adverse effects fully aired before the Project Study plans proceed too far. The content of the Project Study and the assumptions under which SHA evaluates the Alternative proposals must be based on an accurate understanding of the factual circumstances of each affected property. The impacts of the unworkable access plans for the Center and these other properties clearly demonstrate that facts continue to be overlooked or not understood.

Now that SHA has narrowed down to four (4) Alternatives, a compilation of comments particular to each of the remaining July 2015 Alternatives is attached to this letter.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We look forward to working with you concerning the Center, the Project Study, and the concerns of the Owners.

Very truly yours,

LERCH, EARLY & BREWER, CHARTERED

William Kominers

William Kominers

Susan M. Reutershan

Susan M. Reutershan

WK/paj
Enclosure
cc: Mr. Jeremy Beck
Mr. Marc Solomon
Mr. Bart Eisner

SEMINARY PLACE SHOPPING CENTER

(Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland)

MD97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study.

Preferred Elements from Different Alternatives.

From the standpoint of the Seminary Place Shopping Center, (the "Center") and its relation to the adjoining commercial properties fronting on Georgia Avenue, the best parts of the different Alternatives, if they were combined into one, would include:

(1) the full movement signalized intersection in front of the CVS store at the northern entrance to the Center, without any time of day movement restrictions;

(2) a right in/right out intersection with Georgia Avenue in front of the Staples store; and

(3) utilize the closed Gas Station property as access from Georgia Avenue and as stacking for the Car Wash.

The Owners are pleased to see that none of the remaining Alternatives proposes any changes to the entrance to the Center from Seminary Place. Any changes to the Seminary Place entrance would have severe impacts on the functional operation of the Center.

Specific Comments on Remaining Alternatives (dated July 2015).

Provided below is a short summary of the comments from the Owners on the different Alternatives. Some of the Alternatives are better than others, but none of them are truly workable for the Center, for the reasons set forth below.

Alternative 2.

This Alternative makes very few changes to the existing conditions. The principal change, and a negative one at that, is making the entrance from Georgia Avenue in front of the Staples store, into a "right in only". If Alternative 2 goes forward, that entrance should at least be returned to a "right in/right out" configuration.

Alternative 3.

Alternative 3 slightly adjusts the northern entrance to the property near the CVS store, but in return, creates a full movement, signalized intersection. This is a desirable and beneficial modification. However, this Alternative, (like Alternatives 5 and 5C) utilizes the Center's property to provide access and stacking for the Car Wash. As discussed in the attached letter,

utilizing the Center property as access to and stacking for the Car Wash is not acceptable. Besides the fact that the ownership is different and there is no legal basis to utilize the Center property that way, doing so would adversely affect the parking, circulation, loading, and service for the Center.

Alternative 5.

This Alternative appears to create only adverse effects, as a result of eliminating the entrance from Georgia Avenue in front of the Staples store and utilizing the Center as access and stacking to serve the adjoining Car Wash. This is not acceptable and will not be agreed to.

Alternative 5C.

This Alternative slightly adjusts the northern entrance in front of CVS, but in return, creates a full movement, signalized intersection. This is a desirable change. However this Alternative continues to close the Georgia Avenue entrance to the Center in front of Staples. This is not desirable, and will increase the necessary utilization of the new traffic signal, as well as creating undesirable circulation flow within the Center itself. In this design, anyone parked in the southern portion of the Center will now have to return to the north to utilize access to Georgia Avenue, even to go southbound. In addition, Alternative 5C continues to utilize the Center as access and stacking for the adjoining Car Wash. As discussed in the attached letter, both from a standpoint of ownership and grading, as well as impacts on the Center, the Center property cannot be utilized to serve the Car Wash.

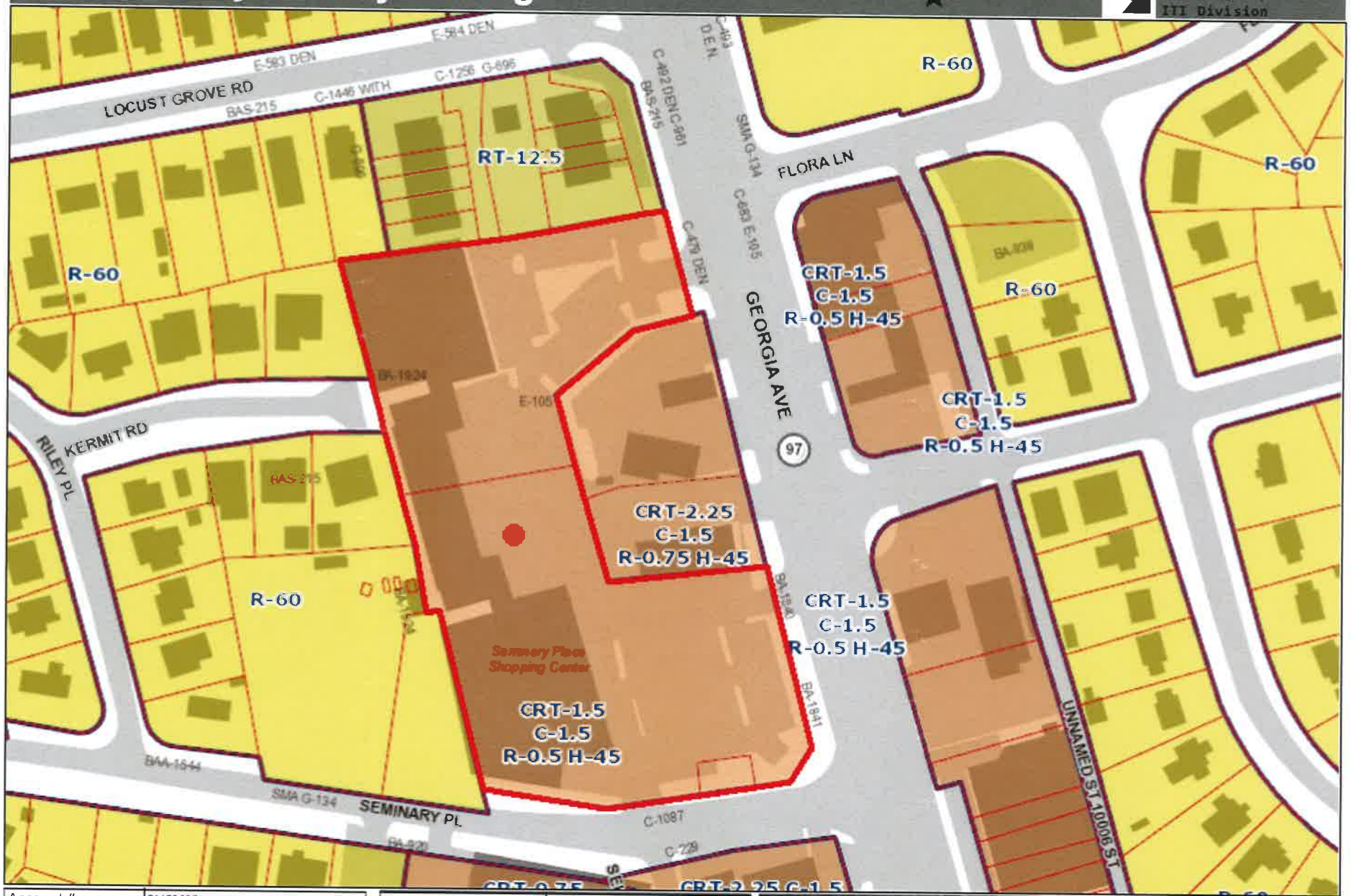
Summary.

The SHA continues to propose access designs that subordinate the use of the Center to the service of the Car Wash. This is not an acceptable methodology. Such use would impede the traffic flow of customers within and through the Center. Imposition of the Car Wash access and stacking on the Center property will cause loss of parking spaces, as well as severe disruption of circulation within the Center. This will affect the tenants under their leases, where required quantities of parking spaces are to be provided, as well as affecting the functionality for customers, all of which will cause substantial negative financial impacts to the Center.

Montgomery County Zoning

Date: 12/1/2015

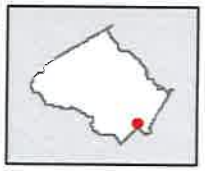
Montgomery County
Planning Department
ITI Division



Account #	01428682
Address	9440 GEORGIA AVE SILVER SPRING, 20910
Zone	CRT-1.5 C-1.5 R-0.5 H-45
Overlay Zone	N/A
TDR Overlay Zone	N/A
Landuse	Retail
Parcel, Lot, Block	N/A, P27, 4

Parking District	N/A
CBD	N/A
Special Protection Area	N/A
Urban District	N/A
Enterprise Zone	N/A
Arts & Ent. District	N/A
Special Tax District	N/A
Legal Description	WOODSIDE HILLS

Bike/Ped Priority Area	N/A
Urban Renewal Area	N/A
Metro Station Policy Area	N/A
Priority Funding Area	Yes
Septic Tier	Tier 1: Sewer existing
Municipality	N/A
Master Plan	NORTH AND WEST SILVER SPRING(2000)
Historic Site/District	N/A



1 inch = 167 feet

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

March 7, 2016

Mr. William Kominers
Ms. Susan M. Reutershan
Lerch, Early & Brewer, Attorneys at Law
3 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 460
Bethesda MD 20814

Dear Mr. Kominers and Ms. Reutershan:

Thank you for your letter regarding the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

The project team has noted your clients' opposition to any proposal to use the Seminary Place Shopping Center entrance for access, vehicle stacking, and/or circulation for the Montgomery Hills Car Wash. We also note your clients' desire to maintain the southernmost shopping center access point on Georgia Avenue as a right-in/right-out. Lastly, we have noted your clients' support for a potential new traffic signal on Georgia Avenue at Flora Lane, provided there are no "time of day" turning movement restrictions at the relocated northern entrance to the Seminary Place Shopping Center.

The project team appreciates the concern of businesses owners and operators whose parking may be impacted by the alternatives under study. Where possible, the project team will seek to provide replacement parking on-site. Where parking cannot be replaced on-site, the project team is identifying potential locations for shared parking lots close to businesses impacted by a loss in the number of parking spaces. However, the exact locations and number of spaces to be provided will depend on which alternative is selected and which properties SHA acquires.

Likewise, the project team understands the needs of businesses to maintain access for loading and unloading of equipment and goods. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will coordinate with property and business owners to ensure they have adequate space to accomplish their loading and unloading activities.

The project team recognizes that the businesses located in the Seminary Place Shopping Center represent an integral component of the Montgomery Hills community, providing needed goods and services to residents, business, workers, and visitors. As we review alternatives, we welcome the opportunity to continue the dialogue with your clients to discuss their concerns and identify ways to minimize impacts.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

J Beck

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Jeremy Beck

From: NoSenderEmailProvided
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 2:00 AM
To: Jeremy Beck
Subject: PLC - Project MO224_11 - Web user comments

---- **Automated Web Project Life Cycle Notice(PLC.PROD.SHA - 1) ----**

A) Communication address :-

Mr.Wm. Le Roy
1505 Sharon Drive
Silver Spring MD, 20910

B) Mailing list options :-

Please ADD me to your mailing list
C) Other information :-

I am impacted by this project

D) Comments/Inquiries :-

Wish to express support for option 5 with cycle track. The idea of improving both pedestrian and cycling access to the ga ave restaurants means safer crossing for families to go out to eat as well as cycle access to Sligo creek trail. Ada compliance is imperative to ensure the local aging population can maintain active lifestyles, too.

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. William Le Roy
1505 Sharon Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Le Roy:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

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Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Maryann McGowan **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 2412 Spencer Road

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Alternative 5 = Cycle Track is my preference, however, how is bike traffic regulated so cars turning right are not crossing in front of moving bikes? Are ~~ds~~ there bike signals included? There should be! The car wash creates traffic backups - can it be relocated?!!

Definetly support

1. Flora lane relocation + signal into shopping area
2. close entrance to Staples parking lot just north of Seminary Place
3. removal of traffic lights at beltway south exit and after ~~north~~ entrance toward Baltimore - light at Flora - much better!

Like change at 16th St - looks costly but would be an improvement.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [x] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 29, 2016

Ms. Maryann McGowan
2412 Spencer Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. McGowan:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The two-way Cycle Track option to Alternative 5 was developed to provide a bicycle facility along MD 97 that capitalizes on the existing bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the I-495 Capital Beltway interchange. Because the cycle track would be provided along the west, or southbound, side of MD 97, bicyclists travelling north on MD 97 would need to make a left turn to enter onto the cycle track. A proposed "bike box" would be provided at the MD 97 intersection with Seminary Road. The bike box is painted onto the northbound MD 97 approach to the intersection between the stop bar and the crosswalk. When MD 97 has a red light, bicyclists can cross in front of the stopped traffic, which allows them to turn left onto Seminary Road and into the cycle track from the left turn lane. In addition, the cycle track would cross several driveway entrances. At these driveway entrances, bicyclists in the cycle track would have the right-of-way over vehicles turning into or out of the driveways. The project team is evaluating the cycle track option and other alternatives to see how bicycle access can be accommodated.

Your recommendation to relocate the Montgomery Hills Car Wash is noted. That property is not currently identified as a displacement under any of the project's alternatives. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410 545 8518, toll-free at 1 800 548-5026, or by e mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Jeremy Beck

From: Cole, Larry [larry.cole@montgomeryplanning.org]
Sent: Monday, December 14, 2015 11:26 AM
To: Jeremy Beck
Cc: Samantha Biddle; Folden, Matthew; Kronenberg, Robert; Anspacher, David
Subject: Montgomery Hills (MD97) comments on public hearing alternatives

Jeremy, I offer the following comments on the Montgomery Hills (MD97) public hearing alternatives. - Larry

This long-awaited project, which is on the County's priority list for State projects, has a very high potential for return on investment for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, bicyclists, business patrons, and residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. We recommend that a multi-modal before-and-after analysis be done to document the success of this project, which has the potential to be an award-winner if done with a thorough consideration of all the needs.

North and West Silver Spring Master Plan (N&WSSMP): The project is generally consistent with the master plan recommendations shown on pages 49-62 of the plan with the following significant exceptions:

- A 12 to 13.5-foot wide panel is recommended in the N&WSSMP between the curb and the building face/right-of-way line, but only a ten-foot-wide panel (sidewalk + landscape panel) would be provided.
- The plan recommends undergrounding utility lines. The public hearing materials do not state whether this would be included, but the submission for the Planning Board review should clarify what SHA's plans are in this regard.
- The plan calls for a number of streetscaping items to be included that are not yet shown:
    - Brick sidewalks
    - Ornamental pedestrian lighting
    - Street furniture (benches, bollards, trash receptacles)
    - Street trees at 30 feet on center in groundcover panels in the median and along both sides of the road: Ample landscaping is needed to tame what is a very harsh area. Street trees are needed to provide a vertical element that softens the landscape, but additional plant materials are also needed.
- The plan recommends that Sutton Place be closed at Seminary Road rather than Columbia Boulevard, as proposed. Please provide an analysis of the pros and cons of each option. If Sutton Place is closed at Seminary Road, consider relocating the Sutton Place entrance to the County-owned parking lot to Seminary Road opposite Selway Lane.
- The elimination of the first row of parking spaces along MD97 at the Dale Center is tied in the master plan to the possible provision of parking spaces behind the shopping center. Has this possibility been investigated or discussed with the owner?

Forest Glen Sector Plan: There is a planned shared use path on the south side of Forest Glen Road that ties into the nearby Sligo Creek Trail. A ten-foot-wide path should be constructed rather than a five-foot-wide sidewalk.

Forest Glen Pedestrian Tunnel: There is a planned pedestrian tunnel under Georgia Avenue at the Forest Glen Metro Station, which is the County's #12 priority for construction and whose design needs to be taken into account in this project; the proposed SWM in the NE corner of the MD97/Forest Glen Road likely wouldn't work for that reason. Incorporating the tunnel into this project would improve pedestrian safety, would save costs, and would also improve the operation of this intersection; the last benefit was the rationale that the pedestrian tunnel was funded as part of the BRAC improvements at the Medical Center Metro Station.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): The public hearing booklet states that the BRT alternative was dropped from further study because the median busway would have negatively affected traffic operations by forcing a reduction in the number of travel lanes and by eliminating needed space for left turn lanes. Much more explanation will be needed as part of your Mandatory Referral submission to justify why such an important transportation component, which was included in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, is not being accommodated in this project. At a minimum, the following topics need to be addressed:

- BRT is not restricted to having a median busway. There are other treatments that can prioritize transit vehicles or at least give them better accommodation, as shown by the queue jumps shown in the TSM/TDM alternative, which are inexplicably left out of the build alternatives. Additional queue jumps at the ramps on the south side of the Beltway are discussed below.
- The number of travel lanes is far less important than the number of people being moved in the facility. A person-throughput analysis is needed.
- The proposed restriction of the NB curb lane to "exit only" to the Inner Loop should go a long way toward correcting the traffic congestion here, but the proposed extension of the splitter island between the ramps should instead be changed to a queue jump for transit vehicles.
- The bus stop locations are not shown as being modified or improved. Some alternatives would have significant impacts on several properties, including the removal of some commercial buildings, and to the extent practicable, these properties acquired should be considered for use as BRT stops in each direction.

Regulatory and National Design Guidance: Montgomery County Urban Areas, Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Guidelines, Maryland Statutory Speeds, AASHTO Pedestrian Guidelines, ADA Best Practices, and AASHTO Roadway Lighting Design Guide:

The Montgomery Hills commercial area is designated by Montgomery County as an Urban area for the purposes of road design While lower target speeds and narrower roads for these areas have been standard since 2008, the Montgomery County Council enacted stricter requirements last year that set the target speed at 25 mph, travel lane widths at ten feet, and curb radii at fifteen feet. See the bill here:
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/bill/2013/201411125_33-13A.pdf

The Montgomery Hills commercial area and Forest Glen Metro Station area are designated as Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Areas, for which many design objectives were set forth in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. See pages 67-72 of the Approved and Adopted plan here:
http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/highways/brt.shtm. One of the criteria in those guidelines is to use six-inch-high curbs rather than the standard eight-inch-high curbs so that the length of handicap ramps is minimized, which in turn minimizes the ramps' incursion into the level area of sidewalks is minimized. We note that six-inch curbs were recently approved for use on MD187 in White Flint, as were ten-foot-wide lanes; we believe that both are appropriate on this project. Reducing the lane width to ten feet would allow the sidewalk areas to meet the 12 to 13.5-foot-width recommended in the N&WSSMP.

While the current posted speed of MD97 through the business district is 35 mph, the statutory speed is 30 mph, per Section 21-801.1(b)(2)(i) of the Maryland Vehicle Law. While the statutory limit can be modified, we do not believe that a higher limit should be retained for MD97 when a major goal of this project is creating a more pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly place. While adherence to the 25 mph speed limit in the County's Road Code would be difficult to achieve in this area, we believe that the posted speed limit and the project's design speed should be no higher than 30 mph. Please provide a written justification if the existing 35 mph speed limit is not lowered.

Crosswalks exist at the intersection of all public streets, per Section 21-101.1(i) of the Maryland Vehicle Law, including tee intersections, whether these crosswalks are marked or unmarked. Pedestrians have the right of way at these intersections and handicapped-accessible crossings must be provided across MD97, per ADA. If a safe pedestrian crossing cannot be provided, these locations should be signed to prohibit the crossing. Streets where no crosswalk is accommodated in one or more alternatives are: Locust Grove Road, Flora Lane, White Oak Drive, Luzerne Avenue, and Cedar View Court.

It's not clear from the drawings, but it appears that there are five-foot-wide sidewalks in some areas that are immediately adjacent to the curb, which should only be done where there is absolutely no alternative. The AASHTO "Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities" (2004) recommends that sidewalks along arterials not in the central business district be six to eight feet wide and have a buffer width of five to six feet. The five-foot-wide sidewalks allow two people to pass each other but do not allow two people to walk side by side; a more comfortable accommodation is needed in a business area. The 12 to 13.5-foot wide panel that was recommended in the N&WSSMP between the curb and the building face/right-of-way line, which would meet the AASHTO standard. Where more space exists between the curb and the right-of-way line or adjacent buildings and parking lots, such as at the NW corner of MD97/Seminary Lane, the sidewalk should be constructed farther back for pedestrian comfort and safety and to reduce the likelihood that sidewalks will be blocked by plowed snow in winter.

While SHA projects are monitored to ensure they comply with ADA requirements, there has been no similar effort to try to meet ADA Best Practices also. This project would better meet ADA Best Practices by providing a minimum six-foot-wide landscape panel to ensure that the sidewalk can be constructed behind – rather than through - the handicap ramps. In addition, having dual directional handicap ramps at corners will better ensure that these ramps are free of plowed snow in winter since single ramps at the apex of the corner often become the repository of snow plowed from both streets.

Continuous lighting to AASHTO standards should be provided within the limits of this project to ensure safety for all users of this very busy road.

Capital Beltway: While drivers along Georgia Avenue (MD97) have experienced traffic congestion for many years, that congestion took a significant change for the worse in the late 1990s when the ramp from the Outer Loop to SB MD97 was relocated from the NW quadrant of the interchange to the NE quadrant and a new traffic signal installed on MD97 just north of the Beltway. The purpose of that project was to improve safety on the Beltway by removing the weaving condition between entering and exiting traffic at the top of the ramps on the Inner Loop. Congestion increased when the signal on the north side of the Beltway was installed but increased much more significantly when the additional signal was installed on the south side of the Beltway. The latter signal was installed in response to a significant spike in crashes at the north side signal that was likely caused by the limits on sight distance for northbound drivers that was created by the combination of the Beltway bridge and the sag curve on MD97.

Removal of the signal on the south side is included in Alternative 3 and the Flora Lane and Cycle Track options for Alternative 5, all of which include a new traffic signal at Flora Lane; the removal of this signal would likely relieve some of the congestion problems associated with its original installation, but this should only be done with an understanding of the past crash problem associated with the limited sight distance and a signal timing at Flora Lane that would ensure to the extent possible that drivers approaching the north signal cannot do so at an excessive speed. In our 1997 comments on the Beltway change, we recommended that SHA consider using a horizontal traffic signal head so that the red light could be seen from a farther distance away. That recommendation was rejected, but we repeat it here for your consideration in the design of the current project.

One change that could be made on the Beltway itself has the potential for improving safety and traffic operations both on the Beltway and on MD97. Traffic on the ramp from NB MD97 merges onto the Outer Loop of the Beltway via a fairly short acceleration lane. Just after this merge, traffic on the ramp from SB MD97 merges onto the Outer Loop. Occasionally, drivers entering the Outer Loop from NB MD97 ignore the striped out pavement at the end of their acceleration lane and just enter the acceleration lane from SB MD97 to get a jump on traffic already on the Beltway. We recommend that SHA consider formalizing this now-illegal movement and make all traffic entering the Outer Loop from MD97 merge into Beltway traffic at only one location, the end of the ramp from SB I-495. This could be done by constructing a barrier from top of the ramp from NB MD97and extending it to the end of the gore of the ramp from SB MD97. There is ample room on the Beltway to do this because pavement for a potential additional lane was constructed when the Beltway bridge was replaced in the late 1990s. Safety and operations on MD97 would be improved by lessening the frequency of backups from the ramp that extend onto MD97. Safety and operations on the Outer Loop would be improved by eliminating one of the merge points; improvements would also be seen on the Inner Loop since there would be less traffic blocking the ramp to NB MD97.

The proposed restriction of the NB curb lane to "exit only" to the Inner Loop should also go a long way toward correcting the traffic congestion here, but the proposed extension of the splitter island between the ramps to effect that restriction should instead be changed to a queue jump for transit vehicles.

Consider the feasibility of providing barrier-separation for the rightmost SB lane of MD97 at the traffic signal just north of the Beltway that would allow drivers bound for the Inner Loop to get to the ramp without stopping. The crosswalk on MD97 at the signal would need to be eliminated but this loss would be more than offset by providing a signalized crossing at Flora Lane to the south and the tunnel under Georgia Avenue to the north. The barrier-separated lane could be used by transit vehicles also whose travel southbound beyond the ramp could be facilitated by constructing a short segment of a bus-only lane in the splitter island between to and from the Inner Loop, similar to what we recommend for northbound traffic, as described above.

The alternatives that eliminate the NB traffic signal in advance of the Beltway should reflect a consideration of the fact that this signal was added because of poor sight distance for the traffic signal north of the Beltway, which resulted in many crashes. A means of avoiding these crashes must be provided as part of this project.

Coordination with MCDOT's project at Seminary Lane and Second Avenue: This project, which MCDOT will be restarting in July 2016, should be considered in the analysis of how the subject project will serve to improve traffic operations and safety. As noted obliquely at the public hearing, the provision of full-time left turn lanes on MD97 will reduce cut-through traffic on local roads, such as Second Avenue. Also, consider whether it would be better to relocate the left turns to NB MD97 now taking place at Seminary Road to Seminary Lane instead. A traffic forecast and analysis of how the proposed changes on MD97 will affect the surrounding area should be included in the information submitted as part of the Mandatory Referral.

MD97 Cycle track: We strongly support the inclusion of a cycle track in this project, would be a great improvement over the almost non-existent current bike accommodation, however we believe that the proposed bollard separation would not provide sufficient protection for bicyclists along the highest volume non-interstate road in the state. We recommend that that a narrow curbed median be provided with the cycle track at the same level of the roadway, or that the cycle track be at the same level as the sidewalk.

Sixteenth Street (MD390) Relocation: For the proposed relocation of 16th Street, there is a pinchpoint at the westernmost house's back property line but a landscape panel of six to eight feet should still be provided since ample ROW exists to the north. Once the sidewalk is past that pinchpoint, it should be have a greater offset from the curb to

provide a better level of comfort for users; the recommended location would tie well into the crosswalk on the south leg of MD97.

The location of the proposed cycle track in this area needs further discussion. The draft Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan includes a recommendation for a cycle track on the east side of Sixteenth Street from Second Avenue to the District of Columbia line. We see two alternatives for the connection between the proposed project and the 16th Street cycle track:

- The cycle track could be extended along the west side of MD97 to the south side of the MD97/MD390 intersection where the cycle track could be carried along the east side of MD390 within the limits of work.
- The cycle track could be extended along the existing alignment of the southbound lanes of MD390 and utilize the curb lane of MD390 to the Second Avenue traffic signal where it could cross to the east side.

Pedestrian Refuges

- A pedestrian refuge should be provided for the crosswalk on the south leg of Georgia Avenue at 16th Street. The existing location of the crosswalk constitutes a hazard to pedestrians since it is in the direct line of travel for NB vehicles on 16th Street turning right to go SB on MD97; if this segment of 16th Street is not reconfigured, the crosswalk should be relocated slightly to the south.
- The pedestrian refuge island and crosswalk on Seminary Road at Snider's should be shown and its design carried forth in any and all alternatives

Additional Landscaping/Streetscaping Items:

- Any retaining walls that are constructed for this project should use concrete formwork with the same pattern and color as the Beltway Bridge and Forest Glen Pedestrian Bridge.
- Any monolithic concrete medians constructed as part of this project should have an ashlar slate formwork pattern and be dark gray in color.
- Where full properties would be acquired, consider providing a higher level of landscaping to compensate for areas that are more difficult to improve.

Additional Comments:

On the east leg of Columbia Boulevard at MD97, eastbound drivers turning left into the County-owned parking lot often cause congestion problems and possibly safety problems by hindering eastbound through traffic and by cutting through the lanes of westbound traffic queued at the traffic signal on MD97. Consider ways to alleviate this problem, including widening the median island to shelter one left-turning car and possibly striping an area at the driveway opening to ensure a break in the queue.

Any relocation of the stacking lane for the car wash should be done in conjunction with the provision of an ample landscaping treatment at the existing driveway opening. Please provide calculations on the required stacking to ensure that the drive aisle for the adjacent shopping center is not blocked with car wash traffic.

It appears that the driveway for the New Yorker Bakery opposite Seminary Lane would be closed but is not specifically called out as such.

For the Exxon station at the SE corner of Columbia Blvd, two of the alternatives have two driveways on MD97 and two have only one driveway. What is the reason for the difference?

One of the three parking lot entrances at the NW corner of MD97 and Seminary Lane is proposed to be closed, with the two options being the closure of the MD97 driveway or the Seminary Road driveway. We believe that the latter would be the safer alternative and better operationally.

Selway Lane and Sutton Place should be labeled. Locust Grove Road is only labeled in the Alt 2 display but should be labeled on all displays.

Jeremy Beck

From: Jeremy Beck
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2016 9:47 AM
To: Cole, Larry
Cc: Christina Brandt; Samantha Biddle; Meredith Hill
Subject: MD 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study
Attachments: MD 97 Hearing comment summary.pdf

Dear Mr. Cole,

Thank you for providing comments on behalf of M-NCPPC regarding the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative. We would like to respond to your comments below (***in italics***):

North and West Silver Spring Master Plan (N&WSSMP): The project is generally consistent with the master plan recommendations shown on pages 49-62 of the plan with the following significant exceptions:

- A 12 to 13.5-foot wide panel is recommended in the N&WSSMP between the curb and the building face/right-of-way line, but only a ten-foot-wide panel (sidewalk + landscape panel) would be provided.

Alternative 3 includes a 13.5 foot-wide sidewalk, which is consistent with the master plan recommendation for MD 97 (Georgia Avenue). The other build alternatives include a 10 foot-wide sidewalk plus landscaping panel in an effort to minimize property impacts along the Georgia Avenue corridor. Sidewalks will be widened as much as possible when not hindered by adjacent properties. Areas that have less than a 13.5 foot sidewalk panel also include on-road bike facilities which can also serve as additional buffer between pedestrians and motorized vehicles.

- The plan recommends undergrounding utility lines. The public hearing materials do not state whether this would be included, but the submission for the Planning Board review should clarify what SHA's plans are in this regard.

Your suggestion that utilities be placed underground is appreciated. The amount of utility impacts will depend on which alternative is selected, and the relocation of utilities will be determined once the project moves into the design phase. Alternative funding sources may have to be investigated for undergrounding of utilities to be included in the project.

- The plan calls for a number of streetscaping items to be included that are not yet shown:
  - Brick sidewalks
  - Ornamental pedestrian lighting
  - Street furniture (benches, bollards, trash receptacles)

- Street trees at 30 feet on center in groundcover panels in the median and along both sides of the road: Ample landscaping is needed to tame what is a very harsh area. Street trees are needed to provide a vertical element that softens the landscape, but additional plant materials are also needed.

Landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed along Georgia Avenue to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and sidewalks/buffers, and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project. Stormwater management locations for the preferred alternative will also need to be considered when evaluating these improvements. Alternative funding sources may need to be investigated for certain streescaping elements to be included in the project.

- The plan recommends that Sutton Place be closed at Seminary Road rather than Columbia Boulevard, as proposed. Please provide an analysis of the pros and cons of each option. If Sutton Place is closed at Seminary Road, consider relocating the Sutton Place entrance to the County-owned parking lot to Seminary Road opposite Selway Lane.

Your concern about the potential closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Place has been noted. The proposed closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Place is intended to improve traffic safety and operations due to this intersection's current proximity to the Seminary Place intersection with Georgia Avenue. While cut-through traffic can never totally be stopped except by completely closing a roadway, the project team will continue to evaluate the traffic impacts of the potential closure of Columbia Boulevard at Seminary Place before identifying a preferred alternative for the project. Based on some of the access concerns that we have heard from the community the project team is currently developing an option for a right-in-only from westbound Seminary Place to southbound Columbia Boulevard which may address some of the circulation concerns.

- The elimination of the first row of parking spaces along MD97 at the Dale Center is tied in the master plan to the possible provision of parking spaces behind the shopping center. Has this possibility been investigated or discussed with the owner?

The project team appreciates the concern of businesses owners and operators whose parking may be impacted by the alternatives under study. Where possible, the project team will seek to provide replacement parking on-site. Where parking cannot be replaced on-site, the project team is identifying potential locations for shared parking lots close to businesses impacted by a loss in the number of parking spaces. However, the exact locations and number of spaces to be provided will depend on which alternative is selected and which properties SHA acquires. The stakeholder group includes representation from Dale Center and much coordination has taken place about their concerns and possible solutions to the loss of parking. It was mentioned during conversations with Dale Center representatives that a rear parking area was provided in the past, and due to community concerns it was removed.

Forest Glen Sector Plan: There is a planned shared use path on the south side of Forest Glen Road that ties into the nearby Sligo Creek Trail. A ten-foot-wide path should be constructed rather than a five-foot-wide sidewalk.

Because the scope of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project is on the Georgia Avenue corridor, the only proposed improvements to Forest Glen Road are where they are needed to improve the intersection with Georgia Avenue. This project would not preclude a future 10 foot-wide shared use path along Forest Glen Road but is not proposing any corridor improvements to Forest Glen Road at this time. A ten foot sidewalk

panel within our study limits will be investigated on the side of Forest Glen Road that helps tie in with the Sligo Creek Trail.

Forest Glen Pedestrian Tunnel: There is a planned pedestrian tunnel under Georgia Avenue at the Forest Glen Metro Station, which is the County's #12 priority for construction and whose design needs to be taken into account in this project; the proposed SWM in the NE corner of the MD97/Forest Glen Road likely wouldn't work for that reason. Incorporating the tunnel into this project would improve pedestrian safety, would save costs, and would also improve the operation of this intersection; the last benefit was the rationale that the pedestrian tunnel was funded as part of the BRAC improvements at the Medical Center Metro Station.

Your suggestion that a pedestrian tunnel crossing Georgia Avenue at the Forest Glen Metro entrance be included as a component of this project has been noted. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), in conjunction with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) completed a feasibility study of pedestrian tunnel and bridge concepts in 2013. As shown at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing, the current scope of this project does not include the potential pedestrian tunnel. SHA will, however, coordinate with MCDOT and WMATA to raise this concern, which was identified by multiple residents to investigate how the pedestrian tunnel effort may be advanced. The proposed stormwater management facility at the northeast corner of Georgia Avenue and Forest Glen Road will be adjusted to avoid the proposed entrance of the pedestrian tunnel.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): The public hearing booklet states that the BRT alternative was dropped from further study because the median busway would have negatively affected traffic operations by forcing a reduction in the number of travel lanes and by eliminating needed space for left turn lanes. Much more explanation will be needed as part of your Mandatory Referral submission to justify why such an important transportation component, which was included in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, is not being accommodated in this project. At a minimum, the following topics need to be addressed:

- BRT is not restricted to having a median busway. There are other treatments that can prioritize transit vehicles or at least give them better accommodation, as shown by the queue jumps shown in the TSM/TDM alternative, which are inexplicably left out of the build alternatives. Additional queue jumps at the ramps on the south side of the Beltway are discussed below.

Queue jumps and transit signal priority are included as TSM/TDM measures as a component of Alternative 2. They were also evaluated as a component of Alternative 5. Queue jumps were removed from Alternative 5 because they would have resulted in several additional commercial displacements. Transit signal priority is still being considered as an element of Alternative 5.

The project team can also investigate an additional queue jump at Seminary Place on the non TSM/TDM alternatives for consistency. The project team has concerns about the potential property impacts for some of the other proposed queue jump locations.

- The number of travel lanes is far less important than the number of people being moved in the facility. A person-throughput analysis is needed.

The traffic analysis performed for the study includes additional buses along the project limits of Georgia Avenue. Working with WMATA it was determined how many additional buses might be added to the system during peak hours of travel along the corridor. A rough percentage for passenger increase was provided by

WMATA for the project limits. The number of vehicles on Georgia Avenue was reduced in the traffic analysis by the amount of the predicted increase in bus passengers.

- The proposed restriction of the NB curb lane to "exit only" to the Inner Loop should go a long way toward correcting the traffic congestion here, but the proposed extension of the splitter island between the ramps should instead be changed to a queue jump for transit vehicles.

The project team will evaluate a potential queue jump at this location. However, we have some initial concerns about how effective a queue jump would be in this location. In order to not affect the merging that is taking place for the multiple ramps of I-495, buses would very quickly need to merge back into the through travel lanes, which will need to be evaluated for safety.

- The bus stop locations are not shown as being modified or improved. Some alternatives would have significant impacts on several properties, including the removal of some commercial buildings, and to the extent practicable, these properties acquired should be considered for use as BRT stops in each direction.

The project team has not yet determined specific locations for proposed bus stops since different alternatives call for bus stops in varying locations. Once a preferred alternative has been chosen, an evaluation of improved bus shelters can be considered in coordination with Montgomery County and WMATA.

Regulatory and National Design Guidance: Montgomery County Urban Areas, Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area Guidelines, Maryland Statutory Speeds, AASHTO Pedestrian Guidelines, ADA Best Practices, and AASHTO Roadway Lighting Design Guide:

The Montgomery Hills commercial area is designated by Montgomery County as an Urban area for the purposes of road design While lower target speeds and narrower roads for these areas have been standard since 2008, the Montgomery County Council enacted stricter requirements last year that set the target speed at 25 mph, travel lane widths at ten feet, and curb radii at fifteen feet. See the bill here:
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/bill/2013/201411125_33-13A.pdf

The Montgomery Hills commercial area and Forest Glen Metro Station area are designated as Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Areas, for which many design objectives were set forth in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. See pages 67-72 of the Approved and Adopted plan here:
http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/highways/brt.shtm. One of the criteria in those guidelines is to use six-inch-high curbs rather than the standard eight-inch-high curbs so that the length of handicap ramps is minimized, which in turn minimizes the ramps' incursion into the level area of sidewalks is minimized. We note that six-inch curbs were recently approved for use on MD187 in White Flint, as were ten-foot-wide lanes; we believe that both are appropriate on this project. Reducing the lane width to ten feet would allow the sidewalk areas to meet the 12 to 13.5-foot-width recommended in the N&WSSMP.

The project team has noted the County's guidelines; the curb height will be determined in final design in coordination with MCDOT and M-NCPPC. The project team will coordinate with SHA's District 3 Traffic office regarding your comment on the proposed lane width.

While the current posted speed of MD97 through the business district is 35 mph, the statutory speed is 30 mph, per Section 21-801.1(b)(2)(i) of the Maryland Vehicle Law. While the statutory limit can be modified, we do not believe that a higher limit should be retained for MD97 when a major goal of this project is creating a more pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly place. While adherence to the 25 mph speed limit in the County's Road Code would be difficult to achieve in this

area, we believe that the posted speed limit and the project's design speed should be no higher than 30 mph. Please provide a written justification if the existing 35 mph speed limit is not lowered.

The project team has noted the County's guidelines; we will coordinate with SHA's District 3 Traffic office regarding your comment on lowering the speed limit on Georgia Avenue.

Crosswalks exist at the intersection of all public streets, per Section 21-101.1(i) of the Maryland Vehicle Law, including tee intersections, whether these crosswalks are marked or unmarked. Pedestrians have the right of way at these intersections and handicapped-accessible crossings must be provided across MD97, per ADA. If a safe pedestrian crossing cannot be provided, these locations should be signed to prohibit the crossing. Streets where no crosswalk is accommodated in one or more alternatives are: Locust Grove Road, Flora Lane, White Oak Drive, Luzerne Avenue, and Cedar View Court.

For all of the proposed alternatives, ADA-accessible crosswalks would be provided across Locust Grove Road, Flora Lane, White Oak Drive, Luzerne Avenue, and Cedar View Court at their intersections with Georgia Avenue. For alternatives where these intersections are unsignalized, no crosswalk would be proposed across Georgia Avenue because there would be no median break. For alternatives where Flora Lane is signalized, the proposed crosswalks would be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. For all signalized intersections, the proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time. The project team will continue to evaluate crosswalk locations in the final design phase.

It's not clear from the drawings, but it appears that there are five-foot-wide sidewalks in some areas that are immediately adjacent to the curb, which should only be done where there is absolutely no alternative. The AASHTO "Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities" (2004) recommends that sidewalks along arterials not in the central business district be six to eight feet wide and have a buffer width of five to six feet. The five-foot-wide sidewalks allow two people to pass each other but do not allow two people to walk side by side; a more comfortable accommodation is needed in a business area. The 12 to 13.5-foot wide panel that was recommended in the N&WSSMP between the curb and the building face/right-of-way line, which would meet the AASHTO standard. Where more space exists between the curb and the right-of-way line or adjacent buildings and parking lots, such as at the NW corner of MD97/Seminary Lane, the sidewalk should be constructed farther back for pedestrian comfort and safety and to reduce the likelihood that sidewalks will be blocked by plowed snow in winter.

The project team acknowledges the desire to provide a buffer between the proposed sidewalk and curb to improve pedestrian level of comfort and has attempted to provide a five foot wide buffer where possible. This buffer could be paved or landscaped. In some locations, the buffer between the curb and sidewalk would have resulted in a building displacement; in these locations the buffer was eliminated for short distances. The project team will continue to evaluate opportunities to provide a buffer between the sidewalk and curb as the project moves forward into the design phase.

While SHA projects are monitored to ensure they comply with ADA requirements, there has been no similar effort to try to meet ADA Best Practices also. This project would better meet ADA Best Practices by providing a minimum six-foot-wide landscape panel to ensure that the sidewalk can be constructed behind – rather than through - the handicap ramps. In addition, having dual directional handicap ramps at corners will better ensure that these ramps are free of plowed snow in winter since single ramps at the apex of the corner often become the repository of snow plowed from both streets.

All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The exact design of the handicap ramps at crosswalk locations will be refined as the project moves forward into the final design phase.

Continuous lighting to AASHTO standards should be provided within the limits of this project to ensure safety for all users of this very busy road.

One of the project's goals is to improve pedestrian safety and comfort along the Georgia Avenue corridor. The provision and design of street lighting along the Georgia Avenue corridor will be determined as the project moves forward into the final design phase.

Capital Beltway: While drivers along Georgia Avenue (MD97) have experienced traffic congestion for many years, that congestion took a significant change for the worse in the late 1990s when the ramp from the Outer Loop to SB MD97 was relocated from the NW quadrant of the interchange to the NE quadrant and a new traffic signal installed on MD97 just north of the Beltway. The purpose of that project was to improve safety on the Beltway by removing the weaving condition between entering and exiting traffic at the top of the ramps on the Inner Loop. Congestion increased when the signal on the north side of the Beltway was installed but increased much more significantly when the additional signal was installed on the south side of the Beltway. The latter signal was installed in response to a significant spike in crashes at the north side signal that was likely caused by the limits on sight distance for northbound drivers that was created by the combination of the Beltway bridge and the sag curve on MD97.

Removal of the signal on the south side is included in Alternative 3 and the Flora Lane and Cycle Track options for Alternative 5, all of which include a new traffic signal at Flora Lane; the removal of this signal would likely relieve some of the congestion problems associated with its original installation, but this should only be done with an understanding of the past crash problem associated with the limited sight distance and a signal timing at Flora Lane that would ensure to the extent possible that drivers approaching the north signal cannot do so at an excessive speed. In our 1997 comments on the Beltway change, we recommended that SHA consider using a horizontal traffic signal head so that the red light could be seen from a farther distance away. That recommendation was rejected, but we repeat it here for your consideration in the design of the current project.

The project team has noted your concerns about safety along northbound Georgia Avenue if the existing traffic signal on the south side of the Capital Beltway interchange were removed. Alternative 3 and Alternative 5 Option B both propose to remove this traffic signal, but only with the addition of a new traffic signal at Flora Lane. The other alternatives, which do not include a new traffic signal at Flora Lane, do not propose to remove the existing signal. If the traffic signal were removed as part of the preferred alternative, appropriate signing could be added to help make drivers aware of the approaching traffic signal. The project team will forward your request for a horizontal traffic signal head to SHA's District 3 Traffic office for their consideration.

One change that could be made on the Beltway itself has the potential for improving safety and traffic operations both on the Beltway and on MD97. Traffic on the ramp from NB MD97 merges onto the Outer Loop of the Beltway via a fairly short acceleration lane. Just after this merge, traffic on the ramp from SB MD97 merges onto the Outer Loop. Occasionally, drivers entering the Outer Loop from NB MD97 ignore the striped out pavement at the end of their acceleration lane and just enter the acceleration lane from SB MD97 to get a jump on traffic already on the Beltway. We recommend that SHA consider formalizing this now-illegal movement and make all traffic entering the Outer Loop from MD97 merge into Beltway traffic at only one location, the end of the ramp from SB I-495. This could be done by constructing a barrier from top of the ramp from NB MD97and extending it to the end of the gore of the ramp from SB

MD97. There is ample room on the Beltway to do this because pavement for a potential additional lane was constructed when the Beltway bridge was replaced in the late 1990s. Safety and operations on MD97 would be improved by lessening the frequency of backups from the ramp that extend onto MD97. Safety and operations on the Outer Loop would be improved by eliminating one of the merge points; improvements would also be seen on the Inner Loop since there would be less traffic blocking the ramp to NB MD97.

Improvements to the Capital Beltway are outside the scope of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study. However, the project team will pass your suggestion on to SHA's District 3 Traffic office for their consideration.

The proposed restriction of the NB curb lane to "exit only" to the Inner Loop should also go a long way toward correcting the traffic congestion here, but the proposed extension of the splitter island between the ramps to effect that restriction should instead be changed to a queue jump for transit vehicles.

The project team will evaluate a potential queue jump at this location. However, we have some initial concerns about how effective a queue jump would be in this location. Also, buses would very quickly need to merge back into the through travel lanes to not affect the merging that is taking place for the multiple ramps of I-495. The project team will evaluate this concept for safety.

Consider the feasibility of providing barrier-separation for the rightmost SB lane of MD97 at the traffic signal just north of the Beltway that would allow drivers bound for the Inner Loop to get to the ramp without stopping. The crosswalk on MD97 at the signal would need to be eliminated but this loss would be more than offset by providing a signalized crossing at Flora Lane to the south and the tunnel under Georgia Avenue to the north. The barrier-separated lane could be used by transit vehicles also whose travel southbound beyond the ramp could be facilitated by constructing a short segment of a bus-only lane in the splitter island between to and from the Inner Loop, similar to what we recommend for northbound traffic, as described above.

The project team will evaluate your suggestion. However, the traffic benefits of providing the barrier separation may not warrant removing the crosswalk at this location. In addition, the existing set of steps leading to the pedestrian bridge would be cut off. In general, removing crosswalks may be contrary to the project's Purpose & Need, of which improving pedestrian accessibility and safety is a major component.

The alternatives that eliminate the NB traffic signal in advance of the Beltway should reflect a consideration of the fact that this signal was added because of poor sight distance for the traffic signal north of the Beltway, which resulted in many crashes. A means of avoiding these crashes must be provided as part of this project.

The project team will coordinate with SHA's District 3 Traffic office regarding your suggestion to provide signing to warn drivers in advance of the upcoming signal.

Coordination with MCDOT's project at Seminary Lane and Second Avenue: This project, which MCDOT will be restarting in July 2016, should be considered in the analysis of how the subject project will serve to improve traffic operations and safety. As noted obliquely at the public hearing, the provision of full-time left turn lanes on MD97 will reduce cut-through traffic on local roads, such as Second Avenue. Also, consider whether it would be better to relocate the left turns to NB MD97 now taking place at Seminary Road to Seminary Lane instead. A traffic forecast and analysis of how the proposed changes on MD97 will affect the surrounding area should be included in the information submitted as part of the Mandatory Referral.

The project team will coordinate with Montgomery County DOT once the county project restarts.

MD97 Cycle track: We strongly support the inclusion of a cycle track in this project, would be a great improvement over the almost non-existent current bike accommodation, however we believe that the proposed bollard separation would not provide sufficient protection for bicyclists along the highest volume non-interstate road in the state. We recommend that that a narrow curbed median be provided with the cycle track at the same level of the roadway, or that the cycle track be at the same level as the sidewalk.

The project team notes M-NCPPC's support for the Cycle Track option. The exact design elements of the cycle track will be determined once the project moves into the design phase, if the Cycle Track option is selected.

Sixteenth Street (MD390) Relocation: For the proposed relocation of 16th Street, there is a pinchpoint at the westernmost house's back property line but a landscape panel of six to eight feet should still be provided since ample ROW exists to the north. Once the sidewalk is past that pinchpoint, it should be have a greater offset from the curb to provide a better level of comfort for users; the recommended location would tie well into the crosswalk on the south leg of MD97.

The project team acknowledges the desire to provide a buffer between the proposed sidewalk and curb to improve pedestrian level of comfort and has attempted to provide a five foot wide buffer where possible. The project team will evaluate opportunities to provide a wider buffer between the sidewalk and curb where possible.

The location of the proposed cycle track in this area needs further discussion. The draft Greater Lyttonsville Sector Plan includes a recommendation for a cycle track on the east side of Sixteenth Street from Second Avenue to the District of Columbia line. We see two alternatives for the connection between the proposed project and the 16th Street cycle track:

- The cycle track could be extended along the west side of MD97 to the south side of the MD97/MD390 intersection where the cycle track could be carried along the east side of MD390 within the limits of work.
- The cycle track could be extended along the existing alignment of the southbound lanes of MD390 and utilize the curb lane of MD390 to the Second Avenue traffic signal where it could cross to the east side.

The exact design elements of the cycle track will be determined once the project moves into the design phase, if the Cycle Track option is selected. The project team will coordinate with M-NCPPC regarding opportunities to connect to the proposed 16th Street cycle track if the Cycle Track option is selected.

Pedestrian Refuges

- A pedestrian refuge should be provided for the crosswalk on the south leg of Georgia Avenue at 16th Street. The existing location of the crosswalk constitutes a hazard to pedestrians since it is in the direct line of travel for NB vehicles on 16th Street turning right to go SB on MD97; if this segment of 16th Street is not reconfigured, the crosswalk should be relocated slightly to the south.

The project team does not propose to widen the existing median on Georgia Avenue south of the 16th Street intersection as part of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project planning study. However, the existing crosswalk across Georgia Avenue on the south leg of the intersection would be upgraded as part of the intersection improvements. The proposed crosswalks would be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers, and the proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

- The pedestrian refuge island and crosswalk on Seminary Road at Snider's should be shown and its design carried forth in any and all alternatives

The project by Montgomery County DOT to improve the pedestrian crossing of Seminary Road at Sutton Place was completed after the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project mapping was updated. The mapping will be updated in the future to show this recent improvement. The pedestrian refuge island may need to be reconstructed depending on which alternative is selected, due to the fact that some alternatives include widening on the south side of Seminary Road approaching the intersection with Georgia Avenue.

Additional Landscaping/Streetscaping Items:

- Any retaining walls that are constructed for this project should use concrete formwork with the same pattern and color as the Beltway Bridge and Forest Glen Pedestrian Bridge.
- Any monolithic concrete medians constructed as part of this project should have an ashlar slate formwork pattern and be dark gray in color.
- Where full properties would be acquired, consider providing a higher level of landscaping to compensate for areas that are more difficult to improve.

Landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along Georgia Avenue to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project.

Additional Comments:

On the east leg of Columbia Boulevard at MD97, eastbound drivers turning left into the County-owned parking lot often cause congestion problems and possibly safety problems by hindering eastbound through traffic and by cutting through the lanes of westbound traffic queued at the traffic signal on MD97. Consider ways to alleviate this problem, including widening the median island to shelter one left-turning car and possibly striping an area at the driveway opening to ensure a break in the queue.

The project team has noted your concern and will evaluate ways to improve the entrance to the parking lot.

Any relocation of the stacking lane for the car wash should be done in conjunction with the provision of an ample landscaping treatment at the existing driveway opening. Please provide calculations on the required stacking to ensure that the drive aisle for the adjacent shopping center is not blocked with car wash traffic.

The project team is continuing to coordinate with the owners of the Montgomery Hills Car Wash, Shell station, and Seminary Place Shopping Center to determine their access needs.

It appears that the driveway for the New Yorker Bakery opposite Seminary Lane would be closed but is not specifically called out as such.

The driveway is proposed to be closed as part of the effort to consolidate the amount of conflict points that are present along the corridor. The project team will make sure that all displays reflect this change if appropriate.

For the Exxon station at the SE corner of Columbia Blvd, two of the alternatives have two driveways on MD97 and two have only one driveway. What is the reason for the difference?

The project team will evaluate the proposed driveway entrances at the Exxon gas station and update the mapping.

One of the three parking lot entrances at the NW corner of MD97 and Seminary Lane is proposed to be closed, with the two options being the closure of the MD97 driveway or the Seminary Road driveway. We believe that the latter would be the safer alternative and better operationally.

The project team has noted your recommendation to close the "Tudor" shopping center parking lot entrance on Seminary Road. Closing this entrance would reduce vehicle conflicts on Seminary Place and could provide an opportunity to improve the parking lot for the "Tudor" shopping center. All build alternatives propose two entrances to the shopping center. The Cycle Track Option proposes to relocate the southbound Georgia Avenue bus stop to the location of the "Tudor" property's current access point on Georgia Avenue; therefore, closing that access point is required with that option.

Selway Lane and Sutton Place should be labeled. Locust Grove Road is only labeled in the Alt 2 display but should be labeled on all displays.

The project team will update the mapping to identify Selway Lane and Sutton Place.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. As you requested we have also attached a brief summary of public comments received at the hearing. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-545-8518 / 800-548-5026
www.roads.maryland.gov
Follow us on Twitter @MDSHA

December 28, 2015

Mr. Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Office and Planning and Preliminary Engineering
Maryland State Highway Administration
Mailstop C-301
707 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. Beck:

As President of the North Woodside-Montgomery Hills Citizens' Association (NWMHCA), I am writing to provide NWMHCA's input on the Georgia Avenue-Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study.

North Woodside is a community of about 300 households located directly west of Georgia Avenue between Seminary Road, Brookville Road, and the CSX railroad tracks. Our neighborhood association represents a vibrant and diverse group of residents who are keenly interested in maintaining and improving the community we live in.

Our neighborhood will be directly impacted by any changes made along the stretch of Georgia Avenue between 16th Street and Forest Glen Road. NWMHCA has been well represented in project stakeholder meetings by Woody Brosnan, as well as other residents who have attended various meetings and followed the project closely. The NWMHCA board has discussed the proposed alternatives at several meetings and we have invited residents to provide their input.

After careful consideration, the NWMHCA board voted to endorse Alternative 5 with a cycle track option.

Among the proposed alternatives, we believe that Alternative 5 with cycle track will have the most positive impact on pedestrian and bicyclist safety as well as addressing a number of problems with vehicle traffic flow through the area.

In particular, I would like to draw your attention to a number of specific proposals in Alternative 5 with cycle track that NWMHCA supports.

- **Build a median along Georgia Avenue between 16th Street and Forest Glen Road.** Establishing a median will make it easier and safer for those on foot or bike to cross Georgia Avenue. It will also prevent drivers from making dangerous mid-

block turns across Georgia Avenue. We strongly encourage the plan to call for trees and other vegetation to be planted in the median as a way of improving the visual appeal of Montgomery Hills and expanding the local tree canopy.

- **Establish dedicated left hand turn lanes along northbound Georgia Avenue at Seminary Road and Forest Glen Road that allow for left turns at all hours.** The current configuration of Georgia Avenue prevents cars from taking left turns onto Seminary Road and Forest Glen Road at rush hour, leading to many illegal turns, U-turns, or traffic cutting through our neighborhood streets in order to reach those roads. Allowing left turns at those intersections during all hours of the day is critical to improving safety on Georgia Avenue and surrounding streets.

- **Close Columbia Boulevard in both directions.** Columbia Boulevard has become a dangerous cut-through road for traffic heading east-bound on Seminary Road who want to reach south-bound 16th Street. Traffic turning right from Columbia Boulevard onto Seminary Road can also be problematic. Therefore, we support closing Columbia Boulevard to address these problems. We oppose any effort to close only part of the intersection, so that cars could still turn right from Seminary Road onto Columbia Boulevard -- it should be closed in both directions. In addition, we strongly encourage you to consider moving the location of the Columbia Boulevard closure closer to Rookwood Road. Moving the closure would allow cars traveling on Seminary Road to maintain access to the gas station and funeral home, while also reducing the number of cars that would access the public parking lot via Sutton Place.

In addition to expressing strong support for these aspects of Alternative 5 with cycle track, NWMHCA has a number of other priorities we want to make you aware of.

- **Take steps to make the neighborhood more pedestrian and bicyclist friendly.** The way Georgia Avenue passes through Montgomery Hills actively discourages use by pedestrian and bicyclists. As your own survey of area residents showed, many residents of nearby neighborhoods would like to walk or bike to the businesses in Montgomery Hills, but are discouraged from doing so by unsafe intersections, lack of sidewalks, and unattractive streetscapes. In order to encourage a more vibrant Montgomery Hills neighborhood, every step should be taken to correct these shortcomings. Intersections and other crossings must be made pedestrian and bike friendly, sidewalks and buffer areas must be improved, and streetscapes must be made more attractive and inviting. This is the only way to ensure that Montgomery Hills can become a thriving and sustainable community for businesses and residents alike.

- **Include trees and vegetation.** The Montgomery Hills business district has the lowest tree canopy ratio in Montgomery County at just 8 percent. As such, we request that you maximize the use of trees and other natural vegetation in the plan for Georgia Avenue. This should include planting trees in the new median, as well as using planters and tree boxes in sidewalks and buffer areas. We also ask that any plan for Georgia Avenue be integrated in a meaningful way with the wooded green space at the intersection of Georgia Avenue and 16th Street. Last year SHA removed many trees at that spot, upsetting members of the community. After much feedback from the public, SHA agreed to replant the area. The SHA Office of Environmental Design now intends to return as much canopy to the site as possible while preserving roadway safety and functionality, with an expected planting date sometime in 2016. We ask you to support the OED's replanting project, with coordination as needed to accommodate future plans for the site.

- **Minimize use of private property for construction staging.** A project of this magnitude will inevitably involve the use of heavy construction equipment and materials over a long period of time. We request that every effort be made to respect private property owners and avoid using private property (particularly land of private homes) to store or transport construction equipment or materials.

Thank for you for taking NWMHCA's input into account on this important project. We look forward to continuing to work with your office in the future.

Sincerely,

Anne Kennedy
President
North Woodside-Montgomery Hills Citizens Association
1919 Glen Ross Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910

cc: Richard S. Madaleno, Jr., State Senator
Alfred C. Carr, Jr., State Delegate
Ana Sol Gutierrez, State Delegate
Jeffrey Waldstreicher, State Delegate
Thomas Hucker, Montgomery County Councilmember

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 23, 2016

Ms. Anne Kennedy, President
North Woodside-Montgomery Hills Citizens Association
1919 Glen Ross Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Kennedy:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

The North Woodside-Montgomery Hills Citizens Association's support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Mr. Woody Brosnan has played an important role in communicating the neighborhood's needs to the project team during the planning process as a member of the project's Stakeholder Group. The Association's continued involvement will ensure that the selected alternative considers the needs of the North Woodside-Montgomery Hills communities. Specifically, we acknowledge the community's support of the following improvements included in the Cycle Track option:

- Construction of a median along Georgia Avenue;
- Provision of left- turn lanes along northbound Georgia Avenue at the intersections with Seminary Road and Forest Glen Road, without turning restrictions during rush hour; and
- Closure of Columbia Boulevard in both directions.

Your request for improved pedestrian and bicyclist access along Georgia Avenue has been noted. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

Your request that trees and vegetation be included in the project has been noted. Landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along MD 97 to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project. SHA will take driver sight lines into account when determining the size and location of plantings. Landscaping options for the sidewalk areas will be dependent on the width of the sidewalks included in the selected alternative, and will also be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project.

The project team understands that construction activity may have a negative impact on traffic flow and could create an inconvenience to area residents. It is possible some temporary lane closures or temporary closures of access points may be necessary during construction. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will develop a "maintenance of traffic" plan in coordination with Montgomery County. During the construction phase, SHA will keep local residents and business owners/operators informed of any changes to traffic flow resulting from construction activities as they occur.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: The Honorable Richard S. Madaleno, Jr., Senate of Maryland
The Honorable Alfred C. Carr, Jr., House of Delegates
The Honorable Ana Sol Gutierrez, House of Delegates
The Honorable Jeffrey Waldstreicher, House of Delegates
The Honorable Thomas Hucker, Montgomery County Council
Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

bcc: Mr. Philip Dacey, Director, Office of Government Affairs, MDOT
Mr. Andy Dentamaro, Federal Legislative Officer, MDOT
Mr. Matt Garbark, State Legislative Coordinator, MDOT
Ms. Natalie Henson, Executive Assistant, MDOT
Ms. Catherine Kahl, State Legislative Assistant, MDOT
Ms. Karen Kirksey, State Legislative Officer, MDOT

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Matt Lloyd **DATE** 12/6/15

ADDRESS 2204 Forest Glen Rd.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

My family lives on Forest Glen Rd. just West of Georgia Ave. While we do drive, our primary concern with the Montgomery Hills Project Plan is that the end result encourage walkable + bikeable community. Focussing on non-car transportation is so important because it accentuates community improves property values, and builds the County tax base by attracting more businesses + neighborhood amenities.

My family regularly walks between the Forest Glen metro station + 16th St. for neighborhood grocery shopping and errands. We use a stroller regularly and are happy to see SHA making the push for ADA-compliant sidewalks on the east and west sides of Georgia Ave.

Similarly, we believe in biking infrastructure along the Project Plan. With the metro station, Sligo Creek trail, and Rock Creek Park so close, there are many neighborhood bikers.

MD SHA will receive many comments about cars + traffic as part of this plan. For my family and my Forest Glen neighbors we strongly believe in infrastructure that promotes non-car transportation. We also ask that SHA not short change the benefits of urban trees in the project plan.

Many thanks!
- The Lloyd Family

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Matt Lloyd
2204 Forest Glen Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Lloyd:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team notes your support for improving bicycle infrastructure, sidewalks, and landscaping along Georgia Avenue. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue. Landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along MD 97 to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Matthew Crowley **DATE** 11/14/15

ADDRESS 2619 Holman Ave

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Matthew Crowley
2619 Holman Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Crowley:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Michael Barreto **DATE** 11/12/2015

ADDRESS 1708 Flora Lane

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** Maryland **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

(1) - Are there plans to rebuild the small businesses that will be displaced?
- If not, will they be compensated and given additional funds to start completely over?

(2) - How will access to the neighborhoods during this time be effected?

(3) - Will building at night occur ??? This is a major concern.

(4) - What is the projected time line for this project?

(5) -

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☒ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☒ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 16, 2016

Mr. Michael Barreto
1708 Flora Lane
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Barreto:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. When the properties and type of impacts are determined, the information is then presented to the public using alternative maps at public involvement events and various publications for comments. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the alternate is funded for detail design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detail design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requests of the detail design, while minimizing impact to personal property of the public.

Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. The build alternatives would impact between 42-44 properties. The majority of the potential property impacts are limited to parking areas and driveways. Where possible, SHA will attempt to mitigate impacts to parking spaces. In all cases, property owners will receive just compensation for the property to be acquired.

The project team understands that construction activity may have a negative impact on traffic flow and could create an inconvenience to area residents. It is possible some temporary lane closures or temporary closures of access points may be necessary during construction. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will develop a "maintenance of traffic" plan in coordination with Montgomery County. During the construction phase, SHA will keep local residents and business owners/operators informed of any changes to traffic flow resulting from construction activities as they occur.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME MICHAEL SUMNER **DATE** DEC. 3, 2015

ADDRESS 1400 E. WEST HYWY APT. 507

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

HAVING READ THE MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY AND LISTENED TO COMMENTS MADE AT THE DECEMBER 1ST MEETING, IT SEEMS THAT THE STATE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING SPENDING A MINIMUM OF $17 MILLION TO IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND COMMERCIAL ACCESS TO THE MONTGOMERY HILLS CORRIDOR AND A WORSE DRIVING SITUATION LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR COMMUTERS COMPARED WITH THE "DO NOTHING" OPTION.

I BELIEVE ANY PROJECT MUST, AT A MINIMUM, LEAVE THE CONGESTION NO WORSE THAN THE NO-BUILD OPTION.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [x] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Michael Sumner
1400 East West Highway, Apt. 507
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Sumner:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 1 – No Build has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

Improvements proposed through this project are not expected to increase traffic capacity along Georgia Avenue. However, by modifying lane alignments and adjusting signal timing, traffic flow may be improved during peak travel periods. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME MIRIAM CAMERON **DATE** 11/17/15

ADDRESS 1504 Norzes Dr

CITY Silverspring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I have reviewed all of the plans + these are my comments

1. This area is chronically congested.
2. Many people walk to and from the metro, bus + commercial stores in this neighborhood & surrounding areas – so improving walking safety should be a priority
3. Adding a bike lane is appropriate and helpful for the environment
4. Adding an extra lane in either direction will just increase travel/congestion – I am against this + any plan which includes new extra lanes
5. Adding a median strip makes it hard to see cars coming from the opposite direction
6. It is not clear that any of the plans show improved cross walks

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [x] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [ ] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 10, 2016

Ms. Miriam Cameron
1504 Noyes Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Cameron:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 2 – Transportation System Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM) is noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers. The proposed traffic signal timing has been re-evaluated to provide adequate pedestrian crossing time.

The project team has noted your support for bicycle improvements along Georgia Avenue. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. The appropriateness of providing on-road bicycle accommodations on Georgia Avenue will be considered by the project team as part of the process of identifying a preferred alternative.

Improvements proposed through this project are not expected to increase traffic capacity along Georgia Avenue. However, by modifying lane alignments and adjusting signal timing, traffic flow may be improved during peak travel periods. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue.

For Alternative 3 and Alternative 5, landscaping elements, such as trees, shrubs, or hardscape treatments such as pavers are proposed for the median along MD 97 to help provide aesthetic improvements through the Montgomery Hills community. The exact types of landscaping elements will depend on the proposed width of the median and will be coordinated with Montgomery County and the community in the design phase of the project. SHA will take driver sight lines into account when determining the size and location of plantings.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME NICODEMUS **DATE** 11/15/15

ADDRESS 2602 LOMA ST

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20902

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

ADDING PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY & ADDRESSING SAFETY CONCERNS SEEMS KEY FOR ANY OPTION MOVING FORWARD. TO INCREASE WALKABILITY & REDUCE CONGESTION ESP. IN LOWER COUNTY/INSIDE BELTWAY, COUNTY MUST PROVIDE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

M' Nicodemus
2602 Loma Street
Silver Spring MD 20902

Dear M' Nicodemus:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team notes your support for improving pedestrian mobility along Georgia Avenue. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME PETER VIECANICKI **DATE** 11/14/15

ADDRESS 2025 LANIER DR

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Your plans are too heavily weighted towards cars. Needs to have more:
- SIDEWALKS / WALKABILITY
- BIKE LANES
- ACCESS TO COMMERCE
- TRANSIT

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☑ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☑ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Peter Viechnicki
2025 Lanier Drive
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Viechnicki:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 – with Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team notes your support for improving bicycle infrastructure, sidewalks, and access to transit and commerce along Georgia Avenue. One of the goals of the project is to improve access and mobility for bicyclists. Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities may also influence nearby shoppers to use alternative forms of transportation to complete short shopping trips; thereby reducing the number of vehicle trips generated on Georgia Avenue. For all of the proposed alternatives, crosswalks will be provided at signalized intersections along the Georgia Avenue corridor. All proposed crosswalks will be provided with ADA-accessible ramps, audible push buttons, and countdown timers.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Quentin Jackson **DATE** 11-18-15

ADDRESS 9200 16th STREET

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** Md. **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I am interested in Alternative 5 which would push South bound traffic on 16th STREET away from my front and extend Columbia Boolevard to take its place. This would mean much less traffic in front of my house and hopefully give me parking on the street.* I SAW this plan in 1993 when I purchased my home and was informed by the sellers that this project would be completed in several years. As you can see I have been waiting 22 years!!

* My home does not have off street parking

Quentin Jackson

I am on the mailing list

MAILING LIST*: ☐ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 16, 2016

Mr. Quentin Jackson
9200 16th Street
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Jackson:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5, which includes a proposed realignment of southbound 16th Street, has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Ramon A Garcia **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 9421 Georgia Ave.

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I am the owner of Silver Spring Jewelry. this project will greatly affect my Business By eleminating most of my parking. On Saturdays. there is a lot of traffic on the parking lot on the corner of georgia Ave and Columbia Blvd. the wood mont Deli is a popular Brunch Restaurant as well as Casa de Montego. the parking lot is full every Saturday from 10am-4p.m. During the week the lot isn't as Busy But the elimination of the parking spots will make it full every day and Impossible on the weekend.

MAILING LIST*: ☐ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

SILVER SPRING JEWELRY & FACTORY INC.
9421 GEORGIA AVENUE SILVER SPRING, MD 20910
Phone: 301-588-0188 ~ Fax: 301-588-0099

12/1/2015

Mr. Jeremy Beck, Project Manager
Maryland Department of Transportation
State Highway Administration
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop C-301
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project No. M0224M11

Dear Mr. Beck,

After attending your first meeting and absorbing the proposed changes as explained to me, I hereby notify you that I support Alternative 1 - No Build. The reason being that I believe that the long construction phase and the elimination of 17 regular parking spaces plus 2 handicap spaces would jeopardize and affect the already non-abundant walk-in traffic and will be perceived as too much of a nuisance even for people that will come to park.
This project will affect all the other businesses and restaurants on the block. I disagree with your observance of the parking situation, because you did not take into account the evenings and weekends when there are no vacant parking spaces available.
In my case, I have invested $1.5 million in the purchase and improvements/renovations of my building plus another $2.1 million in inventory. I expect that this project will ruin my business and I shall be forced to seek restitution from the responsible parties in an amount close to $5 million. I am sure that the other merchants in this block will do the same.

Sincerely,

Ramon Garcia, Owner

OPPE '15DEC04 PM12:00

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Mr. Ramon A. Garcia
9421 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Garcia:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 1 – No Build has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team has noted your concerns about impacts to your business resulting from the potential loss of parking spaces. At the present time, your business is not identified as a potential displacement. While SHA owns approximately 100 feet of right-of-way within the study limits along the Georgia Avenue corridor, additional property will be needed for all alternatives other than the "No-Build" Alternative. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. When the properties and type of impacts are determined, the information is then presented to the public using alternative maps at public involvement events and various publications for comments. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the project is funded for final design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detailed design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requirements of the detailed design, while minimizing impact to personal property or the public.

Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. The build alternatives would impact between 42-44 properties. The majority of the potential property impacts are limited to parking areas and driveways. Where possible, SHA will attempt to mitigate impacts to parking spaces. In all cases, property owners will receive just compensation for the property to be acquired.

The project team appreciates the concern of businesses owners and operators whose parking may be impacted by the alternatives under study. Where possible, the project team will seek to provide replacement parking on-site. Where parking cannot be replaced on-site, the project team is identifying potential locations for shared parking lots close to businesses impacted by a loss in the number of parking spaces. However, the exact locations and number of spaces to be provided will depend on which alternative is selected and which properties SHA acquires. As we review alternatives, we welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your concerns and identify ways to minimize impacts.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Robert Bradin **DATE** 11-24-15

ADDRESS 9511 Riley Rd

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Robert Brudin
9511 Riley Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Brudin:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with Option B – Flora Lane Intersection has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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PLEASE PRINT

NAME SABRINA JAWED DATE

ADDRESS 9504 BOYER PLACE

CITY SILVER SPRING STATE MD ZIP 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I support Alternative 3- Master Plan. I am most interested in access to the pedestrian bridge from the other side of Georgia Avenue and wider sidewalks. These changes would make it safer for pedestrians to get around the area on foot.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [x] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : [x] **Add my name.** [ ] **Delete my name.**

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Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Ms. Sabrina Jawed
9504 Boyer Place
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Jawed:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Samuel Miranda **DATE** Nov 30, 2015

ADDRESS 2212 Forest Glen Rd

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

As a resident of Forest Glen Rd, I have the following comments concerning the intersection of Forest Glen Rd (MD-192) and Georgia Ave (MD-97). I pass through this intersection, walking or driving, several times a day, every day.

Several months ago, SHA installed a "no turn on red" sign at the eastern end of MD-192. The sign restricts eastbound traffic, on MD-192, from turning south, onto MD-97. MD-97 leads to two beltway onramps, and to two southbound streets that lead into downtown DC. My comments:

(1) The "no turn on red" sign has increased the backup of traffic, on MD-192, since drivers must wait through more traffic light cycles to make their right turns. This can add a delay of ten minutes or more.
(2) I've seen some drivers bypass the right turn queue by turning right (illegally) from the center lane.
(3) Since right turns are limited to the green cycle only, more traffic is funneled through the southern MD-97 crosswalk at times when pedestrians are lawfully using it. Furthermore, the drivers could become impatient, and less likely to yield, since they've already endured the additional, aforementioned delays.
(4) I am informed that the "no turn on red" sign is intended to protect pedestrians, in the western MD-192 crosswalk, who might approach cars from the right, and possibly surprise their drivers who are looking left, Into which they could turn (on red). However, this sign cannot protect pedestrians who cross MD-192, on a diagonal, to and from the Metro entrance that is located, on MD-192, about a hundred feet west of the intersection. I suggest that these pedestrians could be better protected by installing a wrought iron fence in the MD-192 median, like the one on Viers Mill Rd, near the Wheaton Metro entrance. This would encourage them to use the crosswalk. An alternative would be to move the Metro entrance to the corner.
(5) Has the SHA performed another traffic study, with the "no turn on red" sign in place, to gauge whether its intended purpose has been achieved?

From my perspective, as a Forest Glen Road resident, I prefer Alternative Designs 3, 5, 5B, and 5 Cycle Track, since they all feature a right turn lane on MD-192, and a dedicated left turn lane on MD-97 (northbound). Whichever of the alternative designs is selected, it would improve safety, in this intersection, by adding a fence in the MD-192 median, and/or by moving the Metro entrance to the corner (if feasible).

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- [ ] Alternative 1 - No Build
- [ ] Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- [x] Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- [ ] Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- [ ] Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 24, 2016

Mr. Samuel Miranda
2212 Forest Glen Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Miranda:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 3 – Master Plan has been noted. In response to complaints from the community about the No Turn on Red restriction that was recently added to eastbound MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) at MD 97 (Georgia Avenue), SHA concurs with your concerns and is pleased to inform you that we have requested that the restriction be lifted, and that the existing "No Turn on Red" sign be replaced by a "Turning Traffic Must Yield to Pedestrians" sign. This type of work normally takes 60 to 90 days to complete, weather and scheduling permitting.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MO224M11 - LOCATION DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS PROJECT PLANNING STUDY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015
6:00 PM - MAPS/DISPLAYS AVAILABLE
7:00 PM - PRESENTATION / TESTIMONY
MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL, 51 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD EAST, SILVER SPRING, MD 20901

PLEASE PRINT

NAME Sean Holloway **DATE** 11-15-2015

ADDRESS 2814 Jutland Road

CITY Kensington **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20895

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

If this is to be done, go with Alt 5 with the Cycle Track. Do it right the first time - will save much hassle and money in the future (just look at the joke that is Obamacare). This section of town is a DISASTER at the current moment.

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Sean Holloway
2814 Jutland Road
Kensington MD 20895

Dear Mr. Holloway:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

Kramer Enterprises

Mr. Jeremy Beck
Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering
707 N. Calvert St., Mail Stop C-301
Baltimore, MD 21298-6521

Re: MD 97 Montgomery Hill Planning Study
Impact to Montgomery Hills Carwash, 9500 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Beck,

I am writing this letter to you as a follow up to our conversation at Blair High School, on the evening of December 1st, where you reviewed the alternatives for the SHA modifications to Rt. 97 through the Montgomery Hills business district.

As discussed, each of the alternatives has a significant adverse impact on the Montgomery Hills Carwash as it relates to the ability of the business to continue operating. As the property owner, I need to have assurances that the business be able to continue its operations unimpeded.

The various alternatives either eliminate the ability for cars exiting the carwash to have a place where they can be properly dried, finished and allow for the customers to reenter the vehicle, or completely close off all ingress to the property, or both.

Obviously, without proper ingress and egress, to and from the property, the business will no longer be able to operate.

Montgomery Hills Carwash has been in operation since the late 1960's and generates significant property taxes, income taxes and employment taxes to the state and county.

Additionally, the business provides significant employment opportunities for many low skilled workers who might otherwise find themselves without a job.

It is important that the SHA assure that this business continue to operate without the impediments that are currently part of each of the proposed alternatives (not including, of course, the "No-Build" option).

Please ensure that this correspondence be included as part of the official record commenting on the SHA proposed alternatives to Rt. 97.

My thanks for your time at the public hearing on this matter and for your consideration of my comments and concerns.

Best wishes for the holidays.

Sincerely,

Sidney Kramer

Sidney Kramer

49 Randolph Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
(301) 236-9411

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 11, 2016

Mr. Sidney Kramer
49 Randolph Road
Silver Spring MD 20904

Dear Mr. Kramer:

Thank you for your letter regarding the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team has noted your concern about impacts to the Montgomery Hills Carwash operations resulting from the proposed improvements to Georgia Avenue. While SHA owns approximately 100 feet of right-of-way within the study limits along the Georgia Avenue corridor, additional property will be needed for all alternatives other than the "No-Build" Alternative. At the project planning phase of SHA projects, businesses and other properties that directly or indirectly affect the construction, operation or safety of any alternative being considered for possible construction are identified as potentially affected properties. These effects may result in the need to acquire easements, partial purchases or full purchases of properties. When the properties and type of impacts are determined, the information is then presented to the public using alternative maps at public involvement events and various publications for comments. After a preferred alternative is selected and if the project is funded for final design, the property needs are further refined to meet the needs of the detailed design. Using this approach, the goal is to satisfy the construction, operation and safety requirements of the detailed design, while minimizing impacts to personal property or the public.

Businesses are identified on the alternatives maps as potential displacements if the amount or location of the property needed for roadway improvements would impact the structure or significantly compromise the ability of the business to continue its business function. The build alternatives would impact between 42-44 properties. The majority of the potential property impacts are limited to parking areas and driveways. Where possible, SHA will attempt to mitigate impacts to parking spaces. In all cases, property owners will receive just compensation for the property to be acquired. The project team welcomes the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your concerns and identify ways to minimize impacts.

At present, the project has only been funded for study and the development of potential alternatives. No funds have been allocated for final design, right-of-way acquisition, or construction.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

MD 97 MONTGOMERY HILLS
ADJACENT PROPERTY/BUSINESS OWNERS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

NEW YORKER BAKERY

PLEASE PRINT

NAME STEVEN RAAB **DATE** 11/18/15

ADDRESS 9443 GEORGIA AVE

CITY SILVER SPRING **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

ACCORDING TO THE FUTURE PROPOSALS, THERE ARE PLANS TO CLOSE OUR ACCESS FROM GEORGIA AVE FOR ACCEPTING DELIVERIES AND LOADING OUR TRUCKS. THIS WOULD HAVE A DIRECT ISSUE FOR OUR BUSINESS.

MAILING LIST*: ☒ **Add my name** ☐ **Delete my name**

*** Persons who have received a copy of the project meeting announcement through the mail are already on the project Mailing List.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

February 8, 2016

Mr. Steven Raab
9443 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Raab:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your concern that the alternatives being considered will eliminate delivery access to your business has been noted. Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

The project team understands the needs of businesses to maintain access for loading and unloading of equipment and goods. Once an alternative is selected and the project moves into the design phase, SHA will coordinate with property and business owners to ensure they have adequate space to accomplish their loading and unloading activities.

The project team is currently evaluating and addressing comments received from the public at the December 1, 2015 Location/Design Public Hearing. SHA plans to identify a preferred alternative for the project later this Winter. A final environmental document summarizing the project will be drafted this Spring, and the project team expects to complete the project planning phase of the MD 97 Montgomery Hills project this Summer.

Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410-545-8518, toll-free at 1-800-548-5026, or by e-mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

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PLEASE PRINT

NAME THOMAS HANNIGAN **DATE** 11/22/15

ADDRESS 2804 Beechbank Rd

CITY Silver Spring **STATE** MD **ZIP** 20910

I/We wish to comment or inquire about the following aspects of this project:

I'D like to see some sort of widening of East bound Seminary Rd intersection of MD-97. Currently, there are 3 lanes, all can turn left (north) on Georgia Ave, and the right lane can turn right, left or straight through Columbia Ave. There needs to be a dedicated right turn only lane there; the traffic backs up quite a bit to 2nd, during rush hours.

Also, as a cyclist, I want to see more dedicated lanes; separated from vehicle lanes, so I support Cycle Track option 5. We need more lanes as such, apart from car lanes.

- Also, please do not remove the signal light on Northbound 97, just past the entrance ramp to 495.

Thanks

Which Alternative do you prefer? (select one)

- ☐ Alternative 1 - No Build
- ☐ Alternative 2 - Transportation Systems Management/Transportation Demand Management (TSM/TDM)
- ☐ Alternative 3 - Master Plan
- ☐ Alternative 5 - Four Lanes Southbound (SB) and Three to Four Lanes Northbound (NB)
- ☐ Alternative 5 with Option B - Flora Lane Intersection
- ☒ Alternative 5 with Cycle Track Option

MAILING LIST* : ☐ **Add my name.** ☐ **Delete my name.**

*** Persons who have received a copy of this brochure through the mail are already on the project mailing list.**

Larry Hogan, *Governor*
Boyd K. Rutherford, *Lt. Governor*

State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Pete K. Rahn, *Secretary*
Gregory C. Johnson, P.E., *Administrator*

March 21, 2016

Mr. Thomas Hannigan
2804 Beechbank Road
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Hannigan:

Thank you for your comments about the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study from Forest Glen Road to 16th Street in Montgomery County. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) appreciates your interest in our efforts and your comments have been included in the project record.

Your support for Alternative 5 with the Cycle Track Option has been noted. The project team is evaluating the cycle track option and other alternatives to see how bicycle access can be accommodated. In addition, the project team has noted your suggestion to provide a dedicated right turn lane from eastbound Seminary Road to Georgia Avenue and to maintain the existing traffic signal on northbound Georgia Avenue at the I-495 interchange.

Public involvement is an important component of all project planning studies. Because of the complexity of this project, it is important that we receive feedback from the people who live, work, and travel through the area. Your comments will become part of a number of considerations (travel efficiency, safety, natural and community impacts, cost, etc.) that the project team will evaluate before selecting a final alternative.

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Thank you again for your comments. If you should have additional questions or comments about the study, please feel free to contact me at 410 545 8518, toll-free at 1 800 548-5026, or by e mail at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.

Very truly yours,

Jeremy Beck
Project Manager
Project Management Division

cc: Ms. Christina Brandt, Environmental Manager, Environmental Planning Division, SHA