

WHEN:	WHERE:
Wednesday, April 22, 2015 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM	Esperanza Middle School 22790 Maple Road Lexington Park, MD 20653

Attend the Public Meeting!

See Inside for More Details

Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor

Pete K. Rahn, Secretary
Melinda Peters, Administrator



PROJECT NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2015

SHA Preferred Alternative Identified; Informational Workshop Scheduled

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), Federal Highway Administration, and local partners are conducting a Project Planning Study on MD 4 between the MD 4/MD 235 intersection in St. Mary's County and the MD 2/4 and Patuxent Point Parkway intersection in Calvert County. After evaluating several alternatives and options, SHA has identified a Preferred Alternative for the project.

All components of the Preferred Alternative were presented at the September 2010 Location/Design Public Hearings with one significant exception – a revised interchange design at the MD 4/MD 235 intersection. Details of the Preferred Alternative are available in the newsletter, on the project web page, and at the upcoming Informational Workshop.

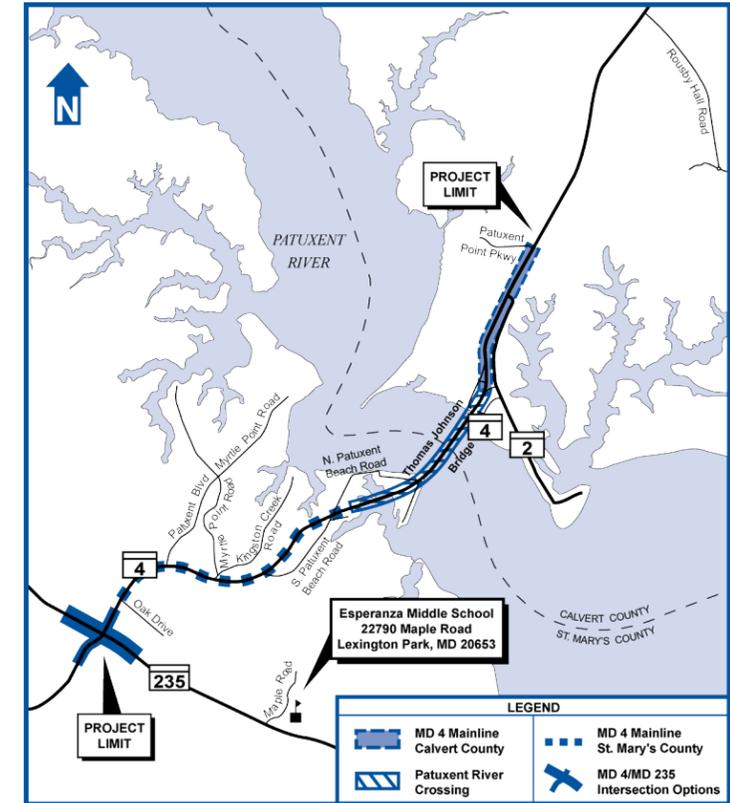
Workshop In April

SHA has scheduled an Informational Workshop for Wednesday, April 22, 2015, from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM, in the Esperanza Middle School cafeteria, 22790 Maple Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

The purpose of the Informational Workshop is to present SHA's Preferred Alternative for the project, obtain public comments, and answer project-related questions. The workshop will be conducted in an interactive open house format that allows attendees to conduct self-paced reviews of project information. Participants may arrive at any time during workshop hours. **There will be no formal presentation.**

SHA's Preferred Alternative

Alternative 4: Thomas Johnson Bridge Four-Lane Parallel Span; MD 4 Mainline Improvements, Calvert County; MD 4 Mainline Widening, St. Mary's County; and MD 4/MD 235 Intersection Option D: Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) has been designated as SHA's Preferred Alternative. Based on the information gathered during detailed engineering and environmental studies and the input received from review agencies and the public, SHA determined that the Preferred Alternative would best address existing and projected operational needs, while minimizing environmental impacts throughout the study area. The estimated total cost is between \$650 million and \$670 million in present-day dollars.



Four-Lane Thomas Johnson Bridge: A new four-lane bridge would be constructed approximately 75 to 100 feet south of the existing Thomas Johnson Bridge. The new bridge would feature two 12-foot-wide lanes, a four-foot-wide median shoulder, and a 10-foot-wide outside shoulder in each direction. The bridge would also include a 10-foot-wide shared-use bicycle/pedestrian path separated by a barrier on the northbound side of the bridge. Upon completion of the new bridge, the existing bridge would be demolished.

MD 4 Mainline Improvements, Calvert County: MD 4 in Calvert County would be widened within the existing grass median to provide a four-foot-wide median shoulder in each direction from north of the Patuxent River crossing to the MD 4/Patuxent Point Parkway intersection. The new median width would be approximately 22 feet. Due to their proximity to the new bridge span, both the existing exit from northbound MD 4 to southbound Solomons Island Road closest to the Visitor's Center, and the existing entrance from Solomons Island Road to MD 2/4 northbound would be closed. Both would be replaced by a new right-in/right-out access point for MD 2/4 northbound/Solomons Island Road approximately 1,000 feet north of the closed access. The remaining access points along MD 2/4 would not be altered.

MD 4 Mainline Widening, St. Mary's County: MD 4 in St. Mary's County would be widened from a two-lane road to a four-lane divided roadway from Oak Drive to North Patuxent Beach Road, with a 30-foot-wide median. The typical section would consist of two 12-foot-wide lanes in each direction, 10-foot-wide outside shoulders, and four-foot-wide median shoulders. Two new travel lanes would be constructed parallel to the southbound side of the existing roadway to carry southbound traffic. The existing two-lane roadway would be reconstructed to carry northbound traffic. Turn lanes may be added to all intersections along MD 4 in St. Mary's County. A 10-foot-wide bicycle and pedestrian facility would be constructed along the northbound side of MD 4. This facility would be separated from the MD 4 mainline by a 10-foot-wide buffer.



SHA's Preferred Alternative (Continued...)

MD 4/MD 235 (SPUI): The SPUI is a grade-separated interchange, with MD 235 crossing over MD 4 on a bridge. MD 4 would remain at its existing grade. All through traffic on MD 235 would be free-flowing (without a traffic signal) with two lanes in each direction. Ramps would be used to direct all left turns between MD 235 and MD 4 to a single signalized intersection under the bridge, which would also control the through movements on MD 4. MD 4 would have two through lanes in each direction. A bicycle and pedestrian path would be provided through the intersection and connect with the county's proposed Three Notch Trail. Service roads would be provided behind the properties along northbound MD 235, and existing direct access to those properties from MD 235 would be eliminated.

Detailed maps of SHA's Preferred Alternative will be on display at the April 22 Public Meeting. Beginning on April 22, copies will also be available on the project's web page at www.roads.maryland.gov; click on **Projects and Studies, SHA Projects Page, St. Mary's County**, and **MD 4 Solomons Island Road – Upgrade Between MD 2 and MD 235** or use the QR code to the right. Copies may also be obtained by contacting the Project Manager, Mr. Jeremy Beck, at 1-800-548-5026 or by email at jbeck@sha.state.md.us.



What is New?

Since the September 2010 Location/Design Public Hearings, SHA has made several changes to the MD 4/MD 235 SPUI design. The SPUI design presented at the hearings showed MD 4 depressed under MD 235; MD 235 would have remained at its existing grade on a structure over MD 4. In order to decrease the number of potential displacements at the intersection, the design has been revised so that MD 4 would remain at grade. With MD 4 now proposed to remain at grade, MD 235 would be elevated above the MD 4 intersection, and would be supported by retaining walls. Ramps at the four quadrants would remain at grade. Additional service roads would be provided in the revised SPUI design to allow access for properties along MD 235 and to minimize displacements.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Resource Category	Alternative 4: 4-Lane Parallel Span	Mainline Calvert County	Mainline St. Mary's County	Option D: Revised Single Point Urban Interchange	SHA Preferred Alternative (Total)
Residential Relocations (number)	3	0	0	0	3
Business Displacements (number)	0	0	0	4	4
Properties Impacted (number)	29	1	19	79	128
ROW Impacts (acres)	11.8	0.1	13.7	30.4	56
Historic Sites (number)	0	0	0	0	0
Stream Impacts (linear feet)	2489	446	1452	735	5122
Stream Impacts (acres)	11.12	0.11	0.31	0.12	11.66
Wetlands (acres)	0.11	0.02	1.26	0.70	2.09
Forest (acres)	4.5	0.06	27.7	18.3	50.56
Floodplain (acres)	0.13	0	0	0	0.13
FIDS (acres)	0	0	3.85	3.89	7.74
Critical Area Impacted (acres)	19.8	2.2	11.3	0	33.3 (2.56 within 100' buffer)
Significant Trees Impacted (number)	0	0	2	5	7

Project Background

The MD 4 Project Planning Study was initiated in December 2006. The study limits extend from the MD 2/4 intersection with Patuxent Point Parkway in Calvert County to the MD 4/MD 235 intersection in St. Mary's County. The study corridor is approximately 4.1 miles long and includes the Thomas Johnson Bridge.

The purpose of the project is to improve existing capacity and traffic operations, increase vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle safety along MD 4, and support existing and planned development in Calvert and St. Mary's counties. The need for the project is a result of existing and projected traffic volumes generated by rapid growth, which will result in increased congestion and increased traffic volumes across the Thomas Johnson Bridge. The bridge presently carries one lane in each direction with no shoulders and becomes a major bottleneck when crashes occur or maintenance is scheduled near or on the bridge. Additionally, there are no dedicated bicycle/pedestrian facilities on the bridge.

SHA held informational open house sessions in Calvert County at Dowell Elementary School on October 2, 2007, and in St. Mary's County at Town Creek Elementary School on October 9, 2007. During these sessions, SHA introduced the project to the public, presented the project purpose and need, and received public comments, which were considered when SHA developed the preliminary alternatives.

On June 16 and 17, 2008, SHA held Alternatives Public Workshops at the locations mentioned above to present preliminary alternatives with their respective environmental impacts, existing traffic and roadway conditions, and planning-level cost estimates. Following the workshop, SHA completed detailed analyses of Patuxent River Crossing Options, MD 4 Mainline Widening Option in Calvert County, MD 4 Mainline Widening Option in St. Mary's County, and MD4/MD 235 Intersection Options.

On September 28, 2010 and September 29, 2010, SHA held public hearings; one at Patuxent High School in Calvert County and the other at Esperanza Middle School in St. Mary's County. At the hearings, SHA presented the results of the detailed engineering and environmental studies. Approximately 300 people attended the two hearings.

Other SHA Projects Near the MD 4 Study Area

MD 4 Northbound Acceleration Lane: A separate project to re-construct a segment of northbound MD 4 (Patuxent Beach Road) from the intersection with MD 235 (Three Notch Road) to Patuxent Boulevard (a distance of approximately ¼ mile) is currently underway. The purpose of the project is to alleviate backups on northbound MD 235 heading to northbound MD 4. The work will consist of widening along northbound MD 4, resurfacing MD 4, installing a traffic barrier, signing, and pavement markings. Construction began in spring 2014 and is estimated to be complete in fall 2015.

Access to Woodland Acres Community: The intersection at Oak Drive and MD 4 is the only access into and out of the Woodland Acres community. Vehicles traveling south from the community toward MD 235 have difficulty making a left turn at the intersection due to high traffic volumes on MD 4. Vehicles traveling south on MD 4 also have difficulty turning left onto Oak Drive to access the community. The State Highway Administration District 5 Office is working with representatives of the Woodland Acres community to examine potential alignments for a connection from the community to MD 235 to provide an alternative to the left-turning movements at the Oak Drive/MD 4 intersection.

Next Steps

SHA expects to obtain Location and Design Approvals on the project in summer 2015. Design funding for the new Thomas Johnson Bridge segment of the project has been programmed. Other segments of the project will be broken into phases for Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction as funding becomes available.

We Want Your Feedback!

SHA is committed to maintaining public involvement throughout the MD 4 project planning process and welcomes your questions and comments. SHA is also available to meet with community groups, business associations, and other organizations. To request a meeting, receive project information, submit a comment, or add your name to the MD 4 Planning Study mailing list, please contact:

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