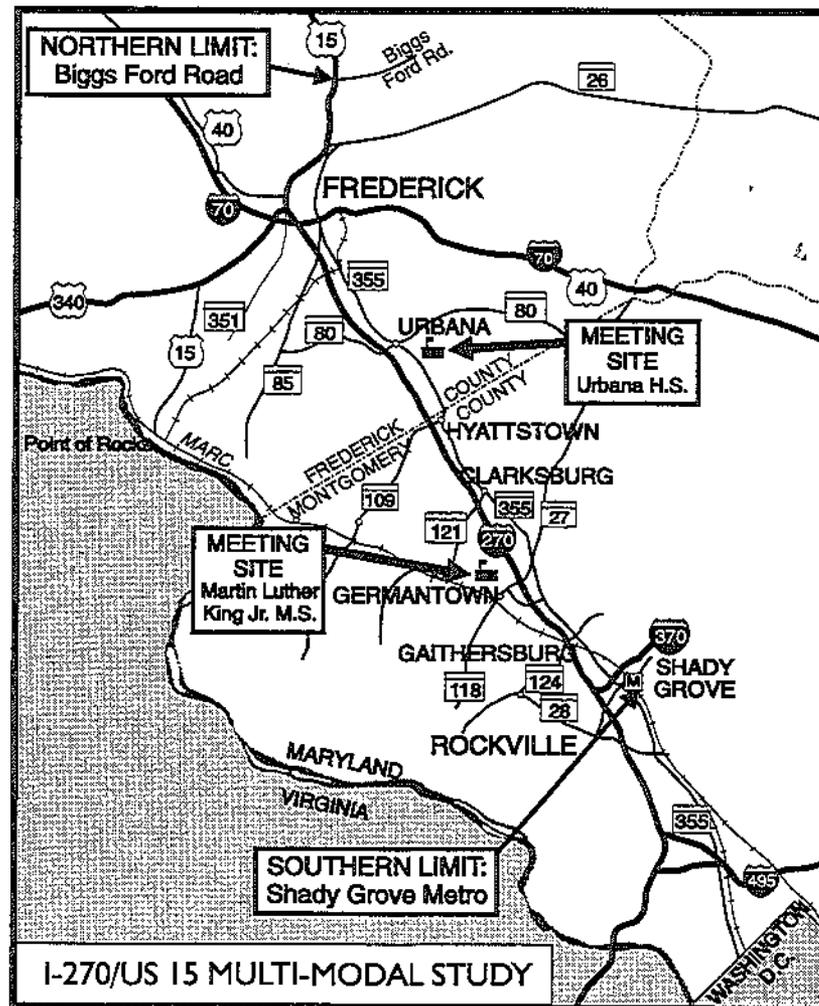




# THE I-270 / US 15 MULTI - MODAL CORRIDOR STUDY

## ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOPS / PUBLIC HEARINGS



**Project No. FR192B11**

**I-270 / US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study**

Shady Grove Metro Station (Montgomery County) to Biggs Ford Road (Frederick County)

### Montgomery County

Wednesday, March 5, 1997  
5:30 - 8:30 PM  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School  
13737 Wisteria Drive  
Germantown, Maryland 20874  
SNOW DATE : March 19, 1997

### Frederick County

Wednesday, March 12, 1997  
5:30 - 8:30 PM  
Urbana High School  
3471 Campus Drive  
Urbana, Maryland 21754  
SNOW DATE : March 26, 1997

( See inside back cover for location maps of meeting sites )

# PROJECT PLANNING TEAM

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## **WELCOME**

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Maryland Mass Transit Administration (MTA) invite you to the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study Alternatives Workshops and Public Hearings. At these meetings, the project team will review the initial transportation strategies investigated and receive comments on the combination alternatives and transportation strategies recommended for future study. This information will enable the project team to develop its recommendations for alternatives for further study, as well as protect or preserve rights-of-way for transportation strategies recommended for future transportation analysis. Following these hearings, the State or local jurisdictions may begin acquisition of certain parcels to preserve and protect rights-of-way in the corridor for future transportation improvements.

## **OVERVIEW**

The I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study began in June 1994 as a jointly sponsored effort by the SHA and the MTA. This study encompasses the I-270 and US 15 corridor from near the Shady Grove Metro Station (Montgomery County) north to Biggs Ford Road (Frederick County). In addition, existing MARC train service and future Frederick MARC service is included in the study (see cover). The project team also includes representatives from Montgomery and Frederick counties, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), the cities of Frederick, Gaithersburg and Rockville, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

To date, the purpose and need statement has been completed and the team has investigated single mode transportation and congestion management strategies. The Alternates Workshops in December of 1995 and January of 1996 displayed data concluding that a combination of transportation strategies will be necessary to address the challenges in this corridor. Since the Alternates Workshops, the team has conducted additional analyses and worked with both public and agency representatives to combine the transportation strategies into multi-modal alternatives on display for comment at these Alternatives Workshops/Public Hearings. Based in part on comments generated from these meetings, the project team will decide what combination alternatives, or individual strategies, will be carried forward for detailed engineering and environmental analyses.

## **Purpose of Meeting**

The purpose of the Alternatives Workshops/Public Hearings is to present and receive official public comments on the progress of and recommendations from the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. Since both the counties and the State are considering corridor preservation or right-of-way acquisition in order to protect the rights-of-way for future transportation strategies as outlined in the team's *VISION* for the Corridor (page 4), this is the public's opportunity to comment on these strategies and potential alignments. The I-270/US 15 project team will review the concerns expressed by the public during these public meetings. Court reporters, as well as project team representatives will be available to take any of your comments. Written input may be provided on comment cards or by letters before March 26, 1997 in order to be included in the public record.

We have provided a pre-paid postage mailer as well as addresses and telephone numbers of project team members on the inside cover of this brochure. In addition, the project team will provide briefings to groups, upon request, and will periodically publish newsletters and brochures which are distributed to the project mailing list. Information will be provided explaining acquisition processes and procedures and appropriate personnel will be present to answer questions and to provide additional information.

## Background

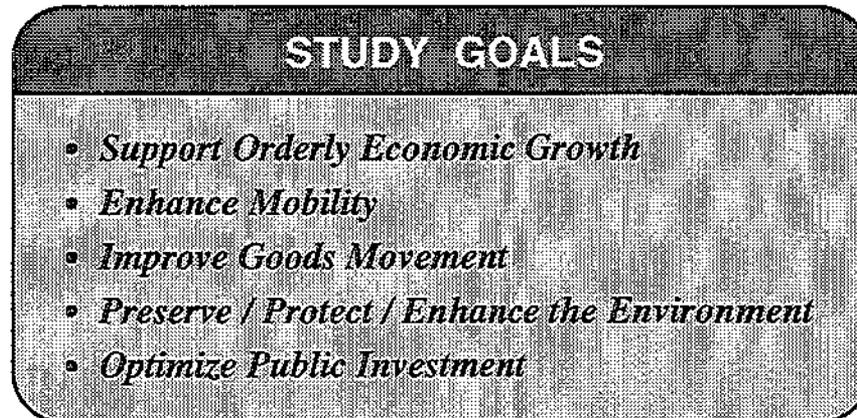
### Program Status

This study is included in the Interstate Development and Evaluation portion of the Draft FY 1997-2002 Maryland Department of Transportation's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) and is currently funded only for the planning phase. It is also included as a study corridor in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOG) Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). If a "build" alternative is selected, the project would become a candidate for engineering (final design), right-of-way acquisition, and construction funding in future programs. The CTP is updated and reviewed annually with local elected officials.

### Purpose and Need

One of the first products developed by the project team was the Purpose and Need Statement. This document discusses the issues that the I-270/US 15 Study intends to address: traffic congestion, the effect of regional growth on transportation trends and safety operations. The goals for this study, outlined in Figure 1 below, establish guidelines for the evaluation of alternatives.

Figure 1



### Traffic Congestion

The I-270/US 15 corridor is a critical transportation link between Frederick and Montgomery counties for local, regional, and interstate commerce. It serves thousands of regional residents who travel to and from work, many of whom are employed at the various high-tech industries and research facilities along the corridor and in Washington, DC. In addition to the various employment centers throughout the corridor, shopping, cultural and recreational activities are also predominant.

Existing traffic volumes from 1993 range from approximately 55,000 vehicles per day at the northern end of the study limits to 203,000 vehicles per day south of the southern study limits. In addition, peak period Levels of Service (LOS) show many of the links of the corridor failing in Figure 2. Level of Service is a measure of traffic operations, and is designated using a grading system much like grade school. LOS "A" indicates free flowing traffic, while "F" indicates failure characterized by severe congestion and delays. Generally, LOS "D" is regarded as the lowest acceptable operating condition.

Figure 2: Peak Period Levels of Service (LOS)

Location	Peak Period (LOS) (Through Lanes)	
	1993 AM	1993 PM
I-270 between Montrose Road and MD 28	D	C
I-270 between Shady Grove Road and I-370	C	B
I-270 between MD 124 and MD 118	D	D
I-270 between MD 118 and MD 121	E	F
I-270 between the County Line and MD 80	D	F
I-270 between MD 80 and MD 85	D	F
US 15 between Opossumtown Pike and MD 26	D	E

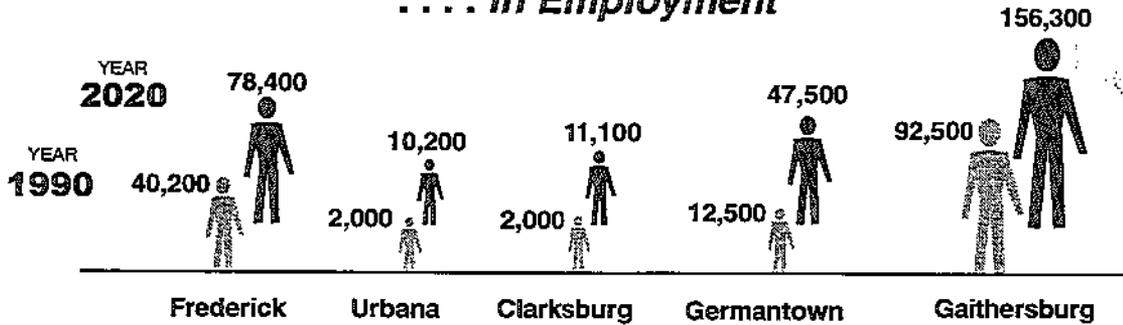
**Regional Growth and Transportation Trends**

Significant population and employment growth within the corridor are expected through the year 2020. This growth will create travel demand exceeding what the existing transportation system can handle resulting in increased congestion, travel times and accidents. Anticipated and planned locations of this residential and commercial growth are located in activity centers, such as Frederick, Urbana, Clarksburg, Germantown and Gaithersburg, as shown in Figure 3.

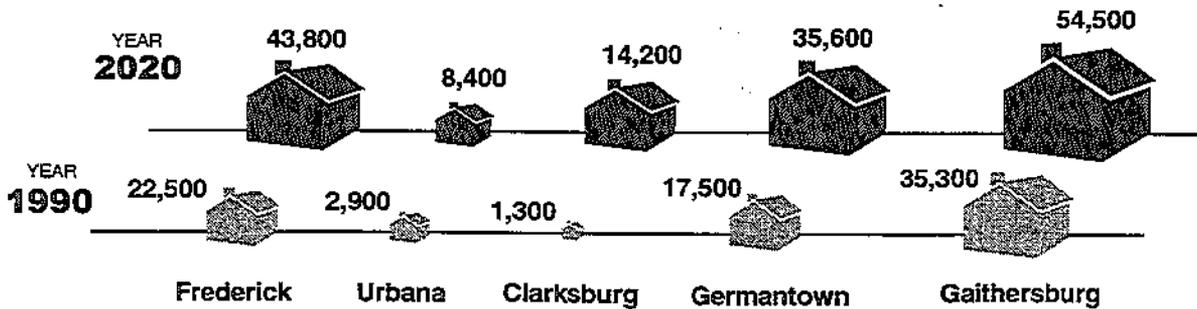
Figure 3

**REGIONAL GROWTH TRENDS**

*... in Employment*



*... in Households*



By the design year of 2020, traffic volumes are projected to increase from approximately 55,000 vehicles per day to 92,000 vehicles per day at the northern end of the study limits, and from approximately 203,000 vehicles per day to 282,000 vehicles per day south of the southern study limits, as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Average Daily Traffic (ADT) Volumes and Growth**

Location	Average Daily Traffic (ADT) Volumes		Growth	
	1993	2020	Increase	%
I-270 between Montrose Road and MD 28	203,000	282,000	79,000	39%
I-270 between Shady Grove Road and I-370	165,000	234,000	69,000	42%
I-270 between MD 124 and MD 118	113,200	209,000	95,800	85%
I-270 between MD 118 and MD 121	66,800	176,000	109,200	163%
I-270 between the County Line and MD 80	62,600	122,000	59,400	95%
I-270 between MD 80 and MD 85	64,100	122,000	57,900	90%
US 15 between Opossumtown Pike and MD 26	55,000	92,000	37,000	67%

### Safety Operations

Accident statistics show that the average accident rate along I-270 in the study area was lower than the statewide average rate for similarly designed highways. The statistics did note, however, that higher concentrations of accidents are prevalent in several interchange merge areas.

## VISION FOR THE CORRIDOR

The I-270/US 15 corridor provides one of two interstate highway connections between the nation's capital and points to the west. Consequently, it is an essential corridor for carrying local and long distance trips, both within and beyond the study corridor. These local and long distance trips require travelers to use various transportation modes. Because of these varying trip types, the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study *VISION Statement* was developed:

*"The VISION for future transportation in the I-270/US 15 corridor is the development of multi-modal alternatives and strategies which will serve both local and long distance trips. The VISION recognizes that these trips may be served with various transportation strategies which include transportation system and demand management strategies (ramp metering (new TSM/TDM strategy added since the Alternates Workshops), bus, ridesharing, telecommuting, etc.), feeder/express bus services, MARC services, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, general use lanes, and a transitway (Light Rail Transit or Busway) beyond the baseline or no-build alternative, which includes all programmed transportation improvements."*

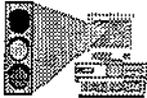
The *VISION* provides the framework from which various corridor trip types would be paired with the compatible transportation strategy. The *VISION* also sets forth future transportation planning goals for implementing additional corridor improvements through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) Constrained Long Range Plan.

# INITIAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES

The initial transportation strategies outlined below have been evaluated by the study team and were presented at the Alternates Workshops:



**No-Build:** Also referred to as the Baseline, includes only previously programmed improvements which are part of the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) for transportation in the region.



**TSM/TDM:** Focuses on relatively low-cost Transportation System Management (TSM)/ Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. These may include ramp metering\*, bus service changes, additional park-and-ride spaces, ridesharing measures, flexible work hours, telecommuting, parking management strategies and Intelligent Transportation Systems technology.



**HOV:** Consists of designating an additional lane for High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs) in each direction, beginning at MD 121 and continuing to I-70.



**Transitway:** Consists of either a busway or rail transit along a separate transitway alignment with stations and parking facilities. This facility would generally parallel I-270 while serving the corridor's residential / business centers.



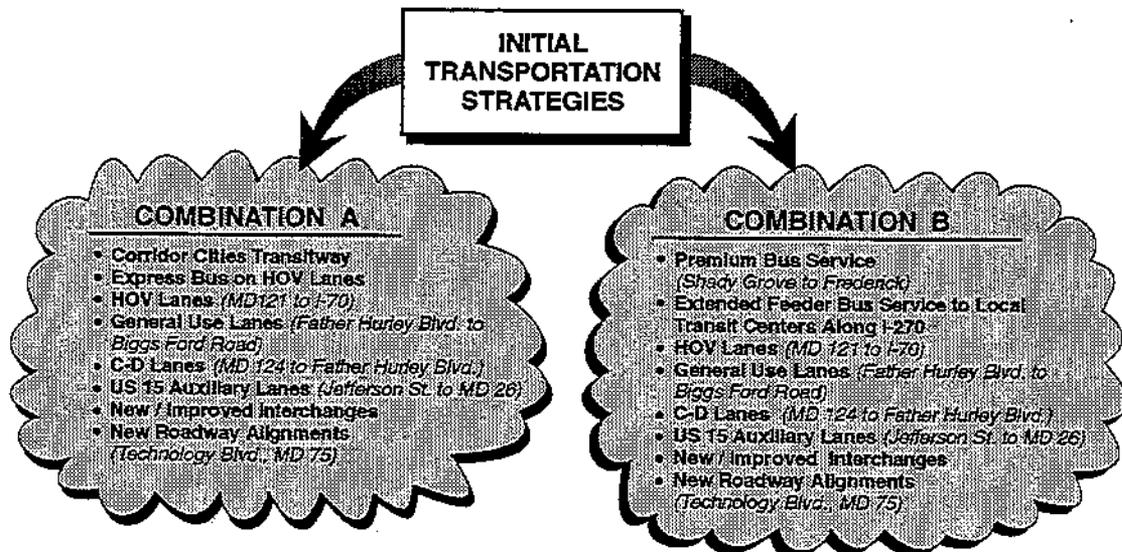
**Widening:** Consists of widening the existing highway to the inside (in the median), to the outside, or both. Widening I-270 to add a general use lane could be accomplished in combination with the HOV strategy.

\* New TSM/TDM strategy added since Alternates Workshops

## ALTERNATIVES RECOMMENDED FOR THE NEXT STEP

Since presenting the initial transportation strategies and the screening and analysis results at the December 1995/January 1996 Public Alternates Workshops, the project team has completed additional studies to combine the initial strategies into two multi-modal combination alternatives, which both include TSM/TDM strategies (see Figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5



### **Interchanges**

New interchanges have been incorporated into the combination alternatives, as shown in Figure 6. Improvements or reconfigurations of other existing interchanges will also be investigated during the next phase of the study.

### **Technology Boulevard**

Technology Boulevard, a parallel roadway system is also incorporated into the combination alternatives, as shown in Figure 6. Technology Boulevard would serve existing and planned development in Frederick County adjacent to I-270, focusing on the land uses located between I-270 and MD 355. It would accommodate a divided roadway, with the possibility of a transitway and a bikeway located within the right-of-way. The preliminary alignments of Technology Boulevard would connect with MD 75 extended just north of the Frederick/Montgomery County line and continue north toward Urbana on the east side of I-270. In addition to Technology Boulevard, the team is investigating extending MD 75 from its existing terminus at MD 355, located just north of Hyattstown, to an interchange with I-270.

## **LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

As is evident in the previous section, almost every transportation strategy was carried into the combination alternatives. A transitway as far north as Frederick was not carried into either Combination Alternative A or B due to insufficient ridership by the design year of 2020. This segment of transitway, while not feasible for design by the year 2020, will be retained in future local and regional transportation plans. The team anticipates recommending this non mode-specific transitway for inclusion in local and regional transportation plans in order to be studied as the need and public acceptance increases. It conforms with the *VISION* for the corridor and inclusion in local and regional transportation plans will support State and county efforts in preserving the rights-of-way from development. Furthermore, preserved or protected rights-of-way will not bias any future highway or transit improvement decisions.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW**

Environmental resources have been taken into consideration and will continue to be important over the course of this study. The location of these resources and levels of impact will be shown in greater detail at the Alternatives Workshops/Public Hearings. Impacts to these and other resources will be evaluated by the project team and will be instrumental in determining what alternatives to carry forward for detailed study and ultimately in identifying the preferred alternative.

### **Natural Environmental Resources**

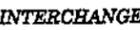
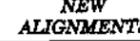
Numerous stream crossings occur along the I-270/US 15 corridor within the project area. These streams are suitable for recreation, habitat for warm and cold water fish and other wildlife. Since proposed improvements may involve construction in these streams and their associated non-tidal wetlands and 100-year floodplains, the team will coordinate with appropriate federal and state environmental agencies in an effort to avoid or minimize impacts. The Monocacy River and Seneca Creek are both State-designated Wild and Scenic Rivers which require protection of shoreline vegetation to help preserve water quality. I-270 traverses the Maryland Piedmont Sole Source Aquifer, a major source of drinking water, between MD 80 (Urbana) and MD 118 (Germantown).

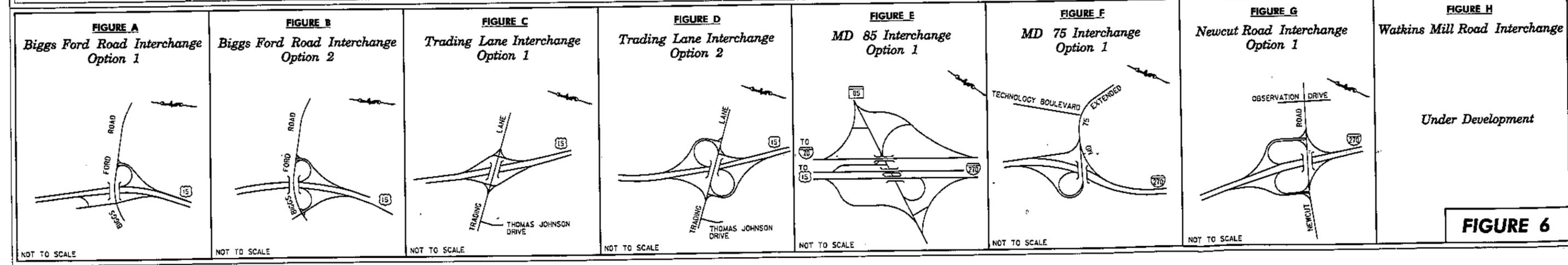
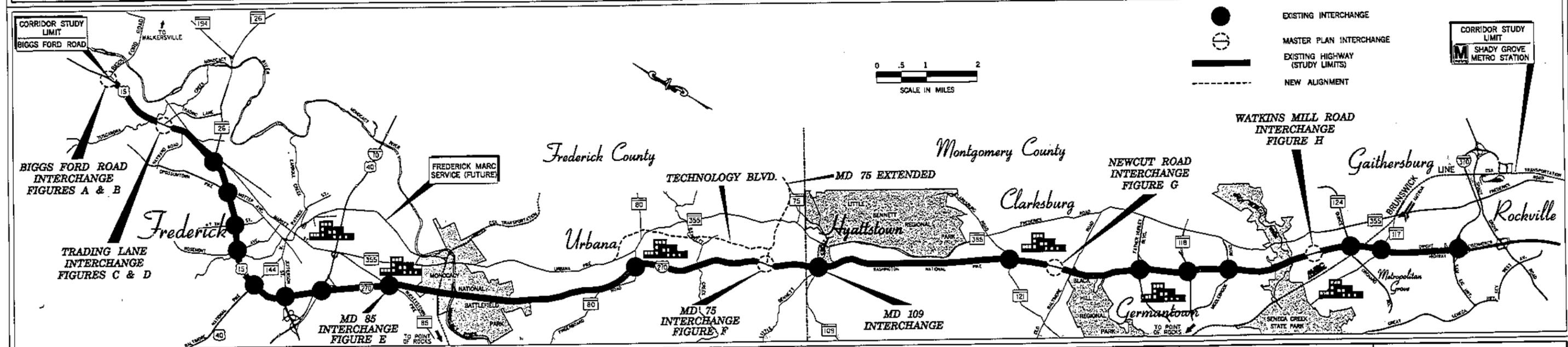
Woodlands are adjacent to the corridor in many areas and would also be affected. No federally listed threatened or endangered species are located in the study corridor; however, the Southern Pygmy Shrew is located in the project area and is being considered for federal listing as a threatened or endangered species. Three State-listed rare plants also exist in the area. Prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance are also located throughout the corridor.

# I-270/US 15 MULTI-MODAL CORRIDOR STUDY

## DRAFT COMBINATION ALTERNATIVES

(NOTE: All Alternatives include TSM/TDM strategies.)

BASELINE	COMBINATION A	COMBINATION B
<b>Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) Improvements</b>	 The "Corridor Cities" Transitway Alignment (LRT or Bus) between the Shady Grove Metro Station and either Germantown or Metropolitan Grove.	Premium Bus service along the HOV lanes from the Shady Grove Metro Station to I-70.  Extended Feeder Bus services for local development to serve I-270 transit centers.
	 Express Bus service along the HOV lanes between the Shady Grove Metro Station and Frederick. Stops would be made at the corridor activity centers in Metropolitan Grove, Germantown, Clarksburg and Urbana.	Four /five stations at major activity centers along I-270 (For example, Metropolitan Grove, Germantown, Clarksburg, Urbana and Frederick, with no stations south of Metropolitan Grove). All stations would be intermodal transit centers accessed by bus/HOV-only (slip) ramps.
	 The addition of an inside HOV lane in each direction from MD 121 to I-70.	 HOV
	 An outside general use lane in each direction from Father Hurley Boulevard to I-70. An inside general use lane in each direction from I-70 to MD 26.	 GENERAL USE LANES
	 An outside general use lane in each direction from MD 26 to Biggs Ford Road.	 INTERCHANGES
	 The extension of C-D lanes from MD 124 to Father Hurley Boulevard (with the option to modify the C-D lane limits slightly in the area between Watkins Mill Road and Middlebrook Road), Auxiliary lane extension both NB and SB in addition to general use lanes on US 15 from the Jefferson Street interchange to MD 26.	 NEW ALIGNMENTS
<b>NEW ALIGNMENTS</b> Biggs Ford Road Trading Lane MD 85 Reconfiguration MD 75 Extended MD 109 Reconfiguration/Closure Newcut Road Extended Watkins Mill Road Extended New or improved interchanges at the following proposed or Master Plan locations: Technology Boulevard would run parallel to I-270 from MD 80 in Urbana to the proposed MD 75 Extended interchange. Two alignment options are under consideration that span a length of approximately 2.9 miles. MD 75 would divert from its existing alignment near Lewisdale Road and extend across MD 355 to a proposed interchange with I-270 north of the Frederick/Montgomery County line.		



**FIGURE 6**

## **Socio-Economic Resources**

Existing land use in the study corridor is a mixture of residential, commercial, employment, agricultural, parkland, and conservation areas. Future land use in the corridor is designated for additional commercial, employment and residential development concentrated primarily in planned growth areas. Most transportation strategies are consistent with the various Montgomery and Frederick county master plans along the corridor. Right-of-way acquisition and residential and business displacements will be determined in the next stage of the alternatives development process. Steps are being taken to identify and avoid disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income communities as required by Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations, February 1994.

Twenty-seven publicly-owned public parks and recreation areas are located in the study corridor, including some larger resources such as Great Seneca Park, Black Hill Regional Park, Little Bennett Regional Park and Monocacy National Battlefield Park.

Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer has resulted in the identification of the following historic sites and historic districts which are listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:

### **Sites**

Ward House/Belward Farm	J.C. Motter/S.C. Simmons
Stancioff House	Hoke/Grove Lime Kiln Property
Linden Grove	William Tabler House
Scheifferstadt	Clarksburg School
Rose Hill Manor Museum	Pleasant Fields
Monocacy National Battlefield Park	England/Crown Farm
J. Calvin Cronice House	Billy King Farm
Guilford	Summit Hall
Birely-Roelkey Farmstead	C.G. Statler House
Dr. Perry House	Thomas Cannery
F. Mantz Farmstead	

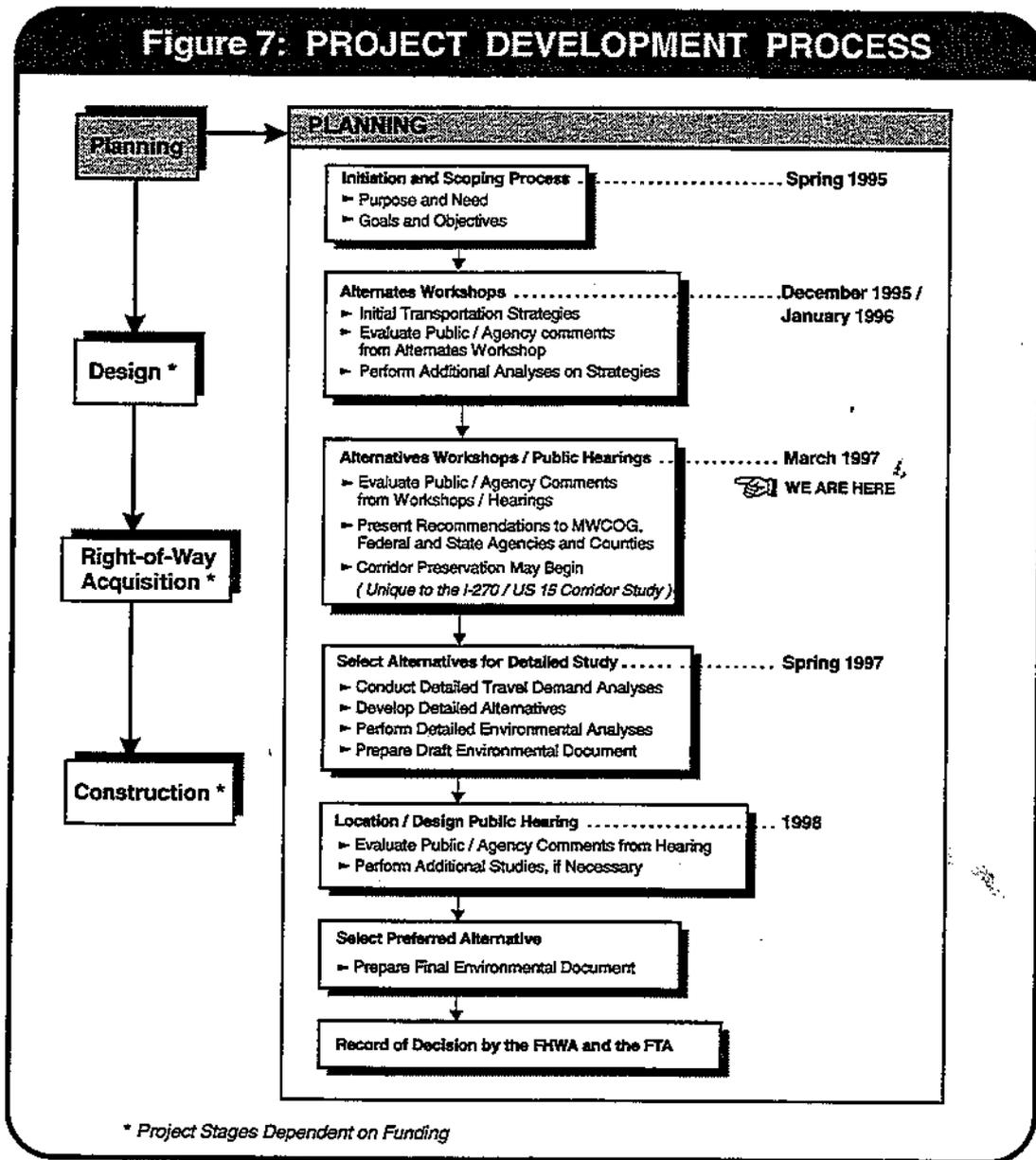
### **Districts**

Town of Washington Grove	Urbana Historic District
Frederick Historic District	Brooks, Russell Walker Historic District
Hyattstown Historic District	Observatory Heights Historic District
Clarksburg Historic District	Chestnut and Meem Historic District

Effects to these resources will be evaluated during the next phase of Project Planning. An assessment of potential for archeological resources will be completed.

Detailed noise and air quality analyses will be undertaken during the next stage of the planning study. Air quality analyses will be performed to determine conformity with the Clean Air Act Amendments.

## REMAINING PROJECT PLANNING STEPS



## MEDIA USED FOR NOTIFICATION

Advertisements appeared in the following newspapers to announce the workshops/hearings:

*Montgomery County Journal*

*Washington Post*

*Frederick News Post*

*Gazette Newspapers (Rockville, Urbana, Gaithersburg, Germantown, Mt. Airy and Damascus)*

*(Frederick) County Globe*

*Washington Afro American*

A news release was distributed to local newspapers and public service announcements were furnished to local radio stations covering the project corridor.

## COMMENTS

We encourage your comments and continued participation in the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. Please remember to fill out the attached comment form. All written statements must be received by Ms. Hoffman at the SHA no later than March 26, 1997 to be included in the "Public Hearing Transcripts." Persons wishing to have their name(s) placed on the project mailing list may do so by completing the enclosed mailer or by furnishing appropriate information to the receptionist at the meetings.

## CONTACTS

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## RIGHT-OF-WAY AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

For more information regarding right-of-way or relocation assistance, please contact:

### State Highway Administration:

In Montgomery County:

**Mr. Richard Ravenscroft, Chief**  
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In Frederick County:

**Mr. Patrick Minnick, Chief**  
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## NON-DISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED AND STATE-AID PROGRAMS

Should you have any questions about non-discrimination in federally assisted and state-aid programs, please contact:

**Mr. Walter Owens, Jr., Acting Chief**  
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Maryland State Highway Administration  
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(410) 545-0315

**Mr. Sam Glasscho, Manager**  
MBE/EEO  
Mass Transit Administration  
6 Saint Paul Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
(410) 767-8362

## **THANK YOU**

Thank you again for your participation in the I-270/US 15 Multi-Modal Corridor Study. Your feedback is important to us, so please do not hesitate to send us your comments. In addition, please feel free to call one of the project team members should you have any questions or concerns.



# THE I-270 / US 15 MULTI-MODAL CORRIDOR STUDY ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOP / PUBLIC HEARING

This form is for your use to enroll your name on the project mailing list and / or to offer written comments. Your feedback is important to us. Please take a few moments to fill out this form and either drop it in the comment box or mail it back at your convenience. If sending by mail, please be sure to fold and close this form by stapling or taping prior to mailing. All postage will be paid by the Maryland Department of Transportation. The State Highway Administration and the Mass Transit Administration thank you for your input.

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- Please add my / our name(s) to the project mailing list.
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What are your thoughts concerning the alternatives presented tonight?

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Are there any additional issues you think the study team should be addressing?

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What changes would you make to the workshop / hearing to make it more helpful? (i.e. length of workshop / hearing, setup, graphics, time, location)

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How did you learn of this evening's workshop / hearing? Please list all sources.

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| • Welcome                                   | YES | NO |
| • Overview                                  | YES | NO |
| • Background                                | YES | NO |
| • Vision for the Corridor                   | YES | NO |
| • Initial Transportation Strategies         | YES | NO |
| • Alternatives for Further Study            | YES | NO |
| • Long Range Transportation Recommendations | YES | NO |
| • Environmental Overview                    | YES | NO |
| • Remaining Project Planning Steps          | YES | NO |
| • Contacts                                  | YES | NO |

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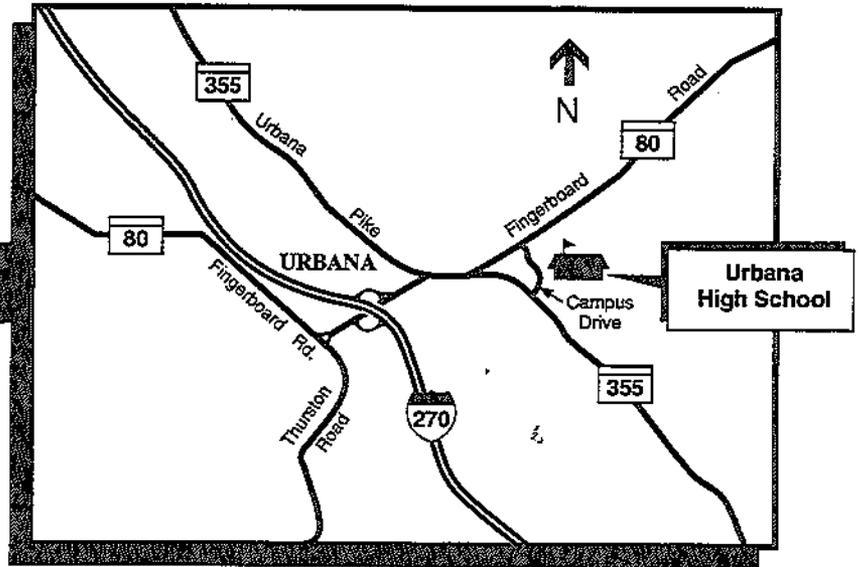
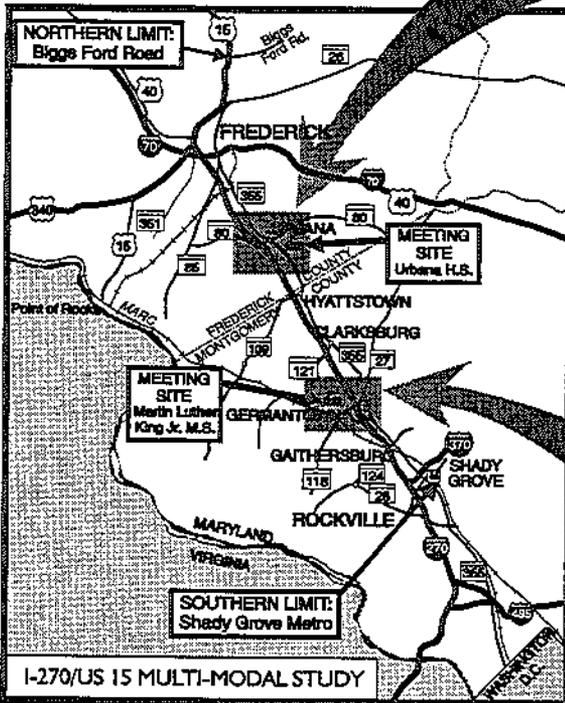


*Maryland Department of Transportation*  
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF PLANNING AND  
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING

BOX 717  
BALTIMORE MD. 21203-0717

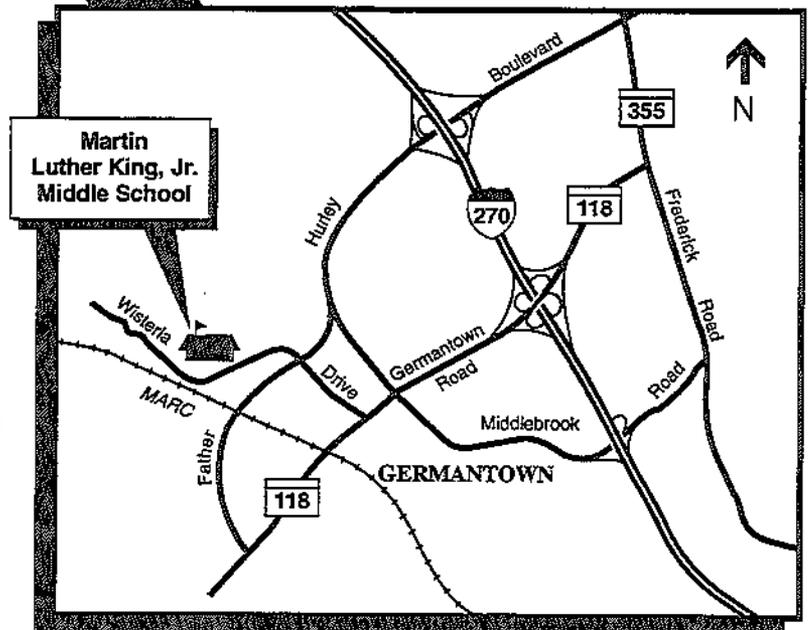


# WORKSHOP / HEARING LOCATIONS



**Wednesday, March 12, 1997**  
 5:30 - 8:30 PM  
 Urbana High School  
 3471 Campus Drive  
 Urbana, Maryland 21754  
 SNOW DATE : March 26, 1997

**Wednesday, March 5, 1997**  
 5:30 - 8:30 PM  
 Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School  
 13737 Wisteria Drive  
 Germantown, Maryland 20874  
 SNOW DATE : March 19, 1997





*Maryland Department of Transportation*  
**State Highway Administration**

**PROJECT PLANNING DIVISION**  
**POST OFFICE BOX 717**  
**BALTIMORE, MD 21203**

**TO:**