

**Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration Briefing, MD 97 Montgomery Project Planning Study**

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Katie Mencarini, Senior Planner, Area 1, [Katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Katherine.mencarini@montgomeryplanning.org), 301.495.4549

*MP*

Mark Pfefferle, Interim Chief, Area 1, [mark.pfefferle@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:mark.pfefferle@montgomeryplanning.org), 301.495.4730

*MB*

Michael Brown, Master Plan Supervisor, Area 1, [Michael.brown@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Michael.brown@montgomeryplanning.org), 301.495.4566

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### Description

- MDOT SHA staff will brief the Board with an update on the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study.
- The Purpose of the project is to establish a balanced approach to transportation within the MD 97 corridor, between MD 192 (Forest Glen Road) and MD 390 (16<sup>th</sup> Street), that addresses vehicular, pedestrian and bicyclist mobility and safety; accommodates proposed transit enhancements; and establishes a sense of place within Montgomery Hills

### Background

MDOT SHA began the MD 97 Montgomery Hills Project Planning Study in 2011 in response to recommendations documented in the *Approved and Adopted 2000 North and West Silver Spring Master Plan*. The Montgomery Hills Proposed Concept, included in the Master Plan, envisioned the future appearance of the Georgia Avenue Corridor as a “landscaped urban boulevard with a center median and wide, unobstructed, tree-lined sidewalks. It also recommends the transformation of the corridor into a “pedestrian-friendly urban boulevard with improved local circulation that supports both residents and merchants”.

The last time MDOT SHA presented this project before the Board was on March 24, 2016. At that meeting project manager Jeremy Beck and then-Environmental Manager Christina Brandt presented the alternatives taken to the Location/Design Public Hearing. M-NCPPC staff recommended support of Alternative 5B, with the relocation of Flora Lane, and a two-way separated bike lane on the west side of Georgia Avenue. Additional recommendations in support of constructing the Forest Glen Passageway (an underground crossing at Forest Glen Road and Georgia Avenue, and tweaks to the design of the corridor were also included.

MDOT SHA expects to receive FHWA approvals on the Final Section 4(f) document and Categorical Exclusion in Summer of 2019, which will complete the planning phase of the project. Funding is allocated for further planning and preliminary design. No funding has been allocated for final design, right-of-way acquisition, or construction at this time.

This project directly relates to the Forest Glen/Montgomery Hills Sector Plan, which is currently underway. M-NCPPC staff is working with MDOT SHA to determine the recommended cross section of Georgia Avenue and between Forest Glen Road and 16<sup>th</sup> Street any associated roadway and intersection projects in both the short-

and long-term to be reflected in the Sector Plan. Whereas the sector plan recommendations are envisioned for long-term implementation, the MDOT SHA's MD 97 Montgomery Hills project is envisioned for short- or medium-term implementation. Long-term recommendations will be included to leverage opportunities for further improvements with future redevelopment of the opportunity sites identified in the Sector Plan.