

## **Item 10 - Correspondence**

**From:** [Robins, Steven A.](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Cc:** [Robins, Steven A.](#); [Biase, Vincent G.](#); [Bob Elliott \(belliott@lantiandevelopment.com\)](#); [McGowan, Jesse](#); [Reed, Patrick](#); [McVary, Jessica](#); [Sartori, Jason](#); [Sanders, Carrie](#)  
**Subject:** Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan Work Session #1  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 15, 2021 10:12:23 AM  
**Attachments:** [Comsat - Corridor Forward Transit Plan Testimony\(4369711.2\)\(4370324.1\).pdf](#)

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Chair Anderson: Attached please find written correspondence on behalf of Lantian Development regarding the Corridor First I-270 Transit Plan. We would appreciate consideration of these comments as part of the Board's work session tomorrow evening. Thank you very much.

Steven Robins

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**Steven A. Robins**, Managing Partner

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**Steven A. Robins**  
*Attorney*  
301-657-0747  
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December 15, 2021

**VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair  
and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board  
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
2425 Reddie Drive, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: *Corridor Forward – I-270 Transit Plan*  
Testimony of Lantian Development

Dear Chair Anderson and Members of the Planning Board:

Our firm represents Lantian Development, the owner the Comsat Property (the “Property”) located in Clarksburg along the I-270 Technology Corridor. The purpose of this letter is to provide the Planning Board with comments on the Public Hearing Draft of the *Corridor Forward – I-270 Transit Plan* (the “Public Hearing Draft”) in anticipation of your upcoming work session, particularly as it relates to recommendations for the proposed Corridor Connectors and the Property.

The Property is a centrally located site for the potential redevelopment of Life Sciences as well as a broad mix of uses that will promote significant economic development within the County. The Property is highly visible along I-270 and recently has generated much interest for highly desirable, economic redevelopment opportunities. A Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) stop is presently planned to be located on the Property at Comsat Drive. Irrespective of the transit mode (*i.e.* light rail or more likely, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)) it is critically important that the future alignment of CCT and/or proposed alignment of the Corridor Connectors is continued to be located on the Property.

The Public Hearing Draft “re-envision[s] the master planned [Corridor City Transitway] as the Corridor Connectors, a network of more buildable dedicated bus lanes, which connect I-270 corridor communities to the county’s existing and planned rapid transit network.” (*See* page 6). The Corridor Connectors include six different components that collectively provide service to Germantown, Clarksburg, Great Seneca, Lakeforest, and Montgomery Village. The Property would be served by the “Milestone / Comsat East Clarksburg Connector,” which features a designated stop on the Property and provides service between Clarksburg and other master planned CCT communities and employment centers along the MD 355 BRT Line.

We support the Public Hearing Draft's objective to implement the purpose of the CCT by bringing transit options to Up-County in the nearer term in a manner that overcomes certain barriers. However, we want to ensure that the Public Hearing Draft does not unnecessarily impede future connectivity to the Property and surrounding I-270 Corridor-adjacent properties in Clarksburg.

As presently drafted, the Milestone / Comsat East Clarksburg Connector is listed as Public Hearing Draft's sixth priority "Near-Term Dedicated Bus Lane." We are concerned about the prioritization of the connectors in the Plan. We certainly support the extension of the re-envisioned CCT (either in the form of light rail or BRT), with a stop, as envisioned, on the Property. But, given the County's desire to catalyze economic development along the I-270 Corridor and the potential for significant development of Life Science and related uses on the Property, we would encourage the Board to consider advancing the Milestone / Comsat East Clarksburg Connector as a priority or, at a minimum, make certain that the Plan provides the flexibility to adjust the order should significant a development opportunity for the County like on the Property warrant such treatment. We do not want the Plan to have the unintended consequence of holding back significant opportunities.

We will be monitoring the Board's upcoming work sessions on the Public Hearing Draft and may have additional comments to offer the Board. We recognize that this letter is being submitted after the Public Hearing and thank you for your consideration of our interests in your review of the *Corridor Forward I-270 Transit Plan*.

Sincerely,



Steven A. Robins

Cc: Bob Elliott, Lantian Development  
Vincent Biase, Esq.

**From:** [Drew Morrison](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Subject:** Corridor Forward  
**Date:** Monday, December 13, 2021 8:58:56 PM

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To the Chair, Planning Board Members, and Planning Staff:

Forgive my delay in providing comments on the Planning Board Draft of the Corridor Forward Plan. I wish to start with sincere thanks to the Planning Department staff who have advanced this Plan and helped to clarify its purpose in a crowded planning environment.

While stakeholders provided comment on a variety of topics on December 9, I wish to highlight one potential incremental strategy worth considering, which may bridge the interest in Metrorail expansion and the interest in MARC expansion.

In order to provide higher quality rail transit to the Upcounty, consider a focused enhancement to MARC service between Germantown and Shady Grove. This service would be run using a DMU, a type of diesel engine train well-suited for short, frequent service. By building the third track in this segment alone, MARC could likely run a 15-minute or more frequent peak-hour service to get Upcounty commuters to the Red Line efficiently. If designed properly, the service could operate like eBART, an extension to the BART system at the far east of the Bay Area, which offers a seamless transition from normal BART to a DMU service for commuters.

Such a project, while it would certainly initially face opposition from CSX, would allow enhanced service to the communities covered by the Plan's proposed Metrorail expansion, be significantly cheaper, and pave the way for long-term MARC expansion while being of limited short-term disruption to the rail corridor. It may be wise to consider as an incremental measure as larger investments are considered.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. I am happy to answer any questions staff may have on this approach.

Sincerely,  
Drew Morrison

**From:** [Coello, Catherine](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Agenda #4: Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan Public Hearing  
**Date:** Friday, December 10, 2021 10:34:58 AM

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**From:** LC <lisajeane@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 8:51 PM  
**To:** Coello, Catherine <catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org>; Anderson, Casey <Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org>; Asare, Isaac <Isaac.Asare@montgomeryplanning.org>; Broullire, Bridget <Bridget.Broullire@montgomeryplanning.org>; Cichy, Gerald <Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org>; Coleman, Delisa <delisa.coleman@mncppc.org>; Eatmon, Jake <jake.eatmon@mncppc-mc.org>; Frymark, Nick <Nick.Frymark@montgomeryplanning.org>; Kronenberg, Robert <robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org>; MC-AuditoriumStaff <AuditoriumStaff@montgomeryplanning.org>; MC-WHQ-02-200-AUD-CAP200 <MC-WHQ-02-200-AUD-CAP200@mncppc-mc.org>; Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>; Moise, Clara <clara.moise@mncppc-mc.org>; Myers, Allison <Allison.Myers@mncppc.org>; Olson, Shannon <shannon.olson@mncppc-mc.org>; Parsons, James <James.Parsons@mncppc-mc.org>; Patterson, Tina <tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org>; Peifer, Christopher <Christopher.Peifer@montgomeryplanning.org>; Stern, Tanya <tanya.stern@montgomeryplanning.org>; Thompkins, Melissa <melissa.thompkins@mncppc-mc.org>; Vaias, Emily <Emily.Vaias@mncppc.org>; Verma, Partap <Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org>; Wright, Gwen <gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org>; Reed, Patrick <patrick.reed@montgomeryplanning.org>; McGowan, Jesse <jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org>; McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>; Sanders, Carrie <carrie.sanders@montgomeryplanning.org>; Sartori, Jason <Jason.Sartori@montgomeryplanning.org>; stacee@nealrgross.com; schedule@nealrgross.com; adsaundry@gmail.com; 3magmom@gmail.com; christinedibble@outlook.com; Steve.silverman@ssgovrelations.com; sesaaw@gmail.com; davidwsears@aol.com; president@thehighroadfoundation.org; lpa@hocmc.org; erikherron@gmail.com; director@obgc.com; cindys369@gmail.com; leonard.suzanne@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Eatmon, Jake <jake.eatmon@mncppc-mc.org>; Olson, Shannon <shannon.olson@mncppc-mc.org>; Thompkins, Melissa <melissa.thompkins@mncppc-mc.org>; Parsons, James <James.Parsons@mncppc-mc.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Agenda #4: Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan Public Hearing

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Ms. Coello,

My sincere apologies for missing tonight's meeting. My mother's doctor called and I had to make that a priority. I hope you understand.

I am opposed to portion of the 1-270 Transit Plan involving the CCT. I don't see that the population in the Great Seneca Science Corridor will support a billion-dollar dedicated busway.

I am pro-transit and find it suitable for cities, but our Ride On buses are undersubscribed (severely, I might add) along Great Seneca Highway and Muddy Branch Road near where I live.

I have been studying this project for years and have met numerous times with the architects of the CCT (when it was being managed by the State). The alignment was so severely flawed (it would actually add 4 minutes to a one-way trip compared to taking the Ride On) that a legislator outright laughed when I showed him this finding. The state dumped it for a reason.

Mostly, however, the plan threatens this suburban lifestyle (which is why we moved here — less traffic, more green space, less pollution). I don't see these things to be luxuries, but choices.

Density is fine for the city, but to carve up our landscape, cut trees and pave green space in exchange for bus exhaust and noise is tone-deaf to what residents here want and blind to future ridership projections.

This quote from [Mass Transit](#) summarizes the issue. I would be interested to know how the Planning Board responds:

"The ridership world we had on March 13, 2020, is not coming back," said Katharine Eagan Kelleman, CEO of the Port Authority, in an interview with the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. "Ridership may continue to grow somewhat, but it will look different. We don't even know what that might look like yet."

Elsewhere, the [APTA dashboard](#) indicates a severe dip in ridership due to the pandemic.

As such, I feel the conversation about the CCT should be tabled entirely until we are healthy as a country; that means comfortable returning to public transit.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Lisa Cline  
420 Upshire Circle  
Gaithersburg

-----Original Message-----

From: Coello, Catherine <[catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org)>  
To: Anderson, Casey <[Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:Casey.Anderson@mncppc-mc.org)>; Asare, Isaac <[Isaac.Asare@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Isaac.Asare@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Broullire, Bridget <[Bridget.Broullire@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Bridget.Broullire@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Cichy, Gerald <[Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:Gerald.Cichy@mncppc-mc.org)>; Coleman, Delisa <[delisa.coleman@mncppc.org](mailto:delisa.coleman@mncppc.org)>; Eatmon, Jake <[jake.eatmon@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:jake.eatmon@mncppc-mc.org)>; Frymark, Nick <[Nick.Frymark@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Nick.Frymark@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Kronenberg, Robert <[robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org)>; MC-AuditoriumStaff <[AuditoriumStaff@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:AuditoriumStaff@montgomeryplanning.org)>; MC-WHQ-02-200-AUD-CAP200 <[MC-WHQ-02-200-AUD-CAP200@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:MC-WHQ-02-200-AUD-CAP200@mncppc-mc.org)>; Mills, Matthew <[matthew.mills@mncppc.org](mailto:matthew.mills@mncppc.org)>; Moise, Clara <[clara.moise@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:clara.moise@mncppc-mc.org)>; Myers, Allison <[Allison.Myers@mncppc.org](mailto:Allison.Myers@mncppc.org)>; Olson, Shannon <[shannon.olson@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:shannon.olson@mncppc-mc.org)>; Parsons, James <[James.Parsons@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:James.Parsons@mncppc-mc.org)>; Patterson, Tina <[tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:tina.patterson@mncppc-mc.org)>; Peifer, Christopher <[Christopher.Peifer@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Christopher.Peifer@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Stern, Tanya <[tanya.stern@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:tanya.stern@montgomeryplanning.org)>;

Thompkins, Melissa <[melissa.thompkins@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:melissa.thompkins@mncppc-mc.org)>; Vaias, Emily <[Emily.Vaias@mncppc.org](mailto:Emily.Vaias@mncppc.org)>; Verma, Partap <[Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:Partap.Verma@mncppc-mc.org)>; Wright, Gwen <[gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:gwen.wright@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Reed, Patrick <[patrick.reed@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:patrick.reed@montgomeryplanning.org)>; McGowan, Jesse <[jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org)>; McVary, Jessica <[Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Sanders, Carrie <[carrie.sanders@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:carrie.sanders@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Sartori, Jason <[Jason.Sartori@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:Jason.Sartori@montgomeryplanning.org)>; Stacey Douglas (NRGCO) <[stacey@nealrgross.com](mailto:stacey@nealrgross.com)>; [schedule@nealrgross.com](mailto:schedule@nealrgross.com) <[schedule@nealrgross.com](mailto:schedule@nealrgross.com)>; Lisa Cline <[lisajeane@aol.com](mailto:lisajeane@aol.com)>; [adsaundry@gmail.com](mailto:adsaundry@gmail.com) <[adsaundry@gmail.com](mailto:adsaundry@gmail.com)>; [3magmom@gmail.com](mailto:3magmom@gmail.com) <[3magmom@gmail.com](mailto:3magmom@gmail.com)>; [christinedibble@outlook.com](mailto:christinedibble@outlook.com) <[christinedibble@outlook.com](mailto:christinedibble@outlook.com)>; [Steve.silverman@ssgovrelations.com](mailto:Steve.silverman@ssgovrelations.com) <[Steve.silverman@ssgovrelations.com](mailto:Steve.silverman@ssgovrelations.com)>; [sesaaw@gmail.com](mailto:sesaaw@gmail.com) <[sesaaw@gmail.com](mailto:sesaaw@gmail.com)>; [davidwsears@aol.com](mailto:davidwsears@aol.com) <[davidwsears@aol.com](mailto:davidwsears@aol.com)>; [president@thehighroadfoundation.org](mailto:president@thehighroadfoundation.org) <[president@thehighroadfoundation.org](mailto:president@thehighroadfoundation.org)>; [lpa@hocmc.org](mailto:lpa@hocmc.org) <[lpa@hocmc.org](mailto:lpa@hocmc.org)>; [erikherron@gmail.com](mailto:erikherron@gmail.com) <[erikherron@gmail.com](mailto:erikherron@gmail.com)>; [director@obgc.com](mailto:director@obgc.com) <[director@obgc.com](mailto:director@obgc.com)>; [cindys369@gmail.com](mailto:cindys369@gmail.com) <[cindys369@gmail.com](mailto:cindys369@gmail.com)>; [leonard.suzanne@gmail.com](mailto:leonard.suzanne@gmail.com) <[leonard.suzanne@gmail.com](mailto:leonard.suzanne@gmail.com)>; Cc: Eatmon, Jake <[jake.eatmon@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:jake.eatmon@mncppc-mc.org)>; Olson, Shannon <[shannon.olson@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:shannon.olson@mncppc-mc.org)>; Thompkins, Melissa <[melissa.thompkins@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:melissa.thompkins@mncppc-mc.org)>; Parsons, James <[James.Parsons@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:James.Parsons@mncppc-mc.org)>

Sent: Wed, Dec 8, 2021 5:08 pm

Subject: Agenda #4: Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan Public Hearing

**Please do not forward this invitation.**

#### **Agenda #4: Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan Public Hearing**

- **Please join the meeting at 6:15PM for setup.** The meeting will begin live streaming at 6:30PM.
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**From:** [Tina Slater](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony - Corridor Forward  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 11:02:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [Testimony.Corridor Forward.Tina Slater.2021-12-09.pdf](#)

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Chair Anderson & Commissioners,

Attached is my one-page testimony on Corridor Forward.  
I am very glad you are working on this plan for mid- and up-county.

Thank you,  
Tina Slater  
301-585-5038 home/landline





Don & Tina Slater  
402 Mansfield Road  
Silver Spring MD 20910-5515

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To: Chair Anderson and Planning Board Commissioners  
Subject: Corridor Forward Testimony  
Date: December 9, 2021

Dear Chair Anderson and Commissioners:

I'm sending this testimony, speaking as an individual.  
The Corridor Forward Plan is smart and needed now.  
I agree with the plan's crucial first step -- **Dedicated Bus Lanes** on 355 and Veirs Mill.  
This will move us closer to our goal of 80% GHG reduction by 2027.

More transit = less congestion  
The most critical step we can take is to create \*dedicated bus lanes\*.  
We must prioritize transit, even if it means taking an existing car lane.  
Why do we prioritize drivers? Let's prioritize the environment.  
A bus moving in its own dedicated lane is an "advertisement" to solo drivers sitting in traffic.

Transit is sustainable – driving cars is not.  
GHG emissions degrade our health and environment.  
Taking transit saves households money. AAA says the cost of owning a car is \$10,000 a year.  
Transit users walk more and reduce their chances of obesity. CDC says 42% of Americans are obese.

Good transit rewards lower-income households.  
The median annual household income of a Ride On rider is \$35,000, while the median annual household income of a county resident is \$108,000.

Extending the Red Line is a very, very long way off.  
Acquiring land (in some places) for additional third track for MARC is a more near-term solution.

I appreciate the Planning Board working on a Transit solution for mid- and up-county. It is sorely needed.  
Expanding 270/495 and signing a 50-year contract with an Australian firm who's in it for tolls is pure folly.

Sincerely,

Tina Slater  
301-585-5038 home/landline  
Email: slater.tina@gmail.com

**From:** [Joe McAndrew](#)  
**To:** [McGowan, Jesse](#); [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Cc:** [McVary, Jessica](#); [Reed, Patrick](#); [Anderson, Casey](#); [John Hillegass](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Public Hearing Draft Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 5:08:32 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Montgomery County Planning Team –

My apologies for missing the timeframe for providing public testimony or being able to attend the important public discussion re: the Corridor Forward Plan. First, job well done for taking on such a large task. Thank you for providing the Greater Washington Partnership the opportunity review and provide feedback on the Draft for Corridor Forward: the I-270 Transit Plan (“Corridor Forward”). We support many of the aspects of this important plan, including support for the MD 355 and the Veirs Mill BRTs.

We are concerned/alarmed with the findings that devalue the opportunity before the county and the state from enhancements to MARC’s Brunswick Line. While we see issues with the data the underpin the findings in the draft pertaining to MARC and Metrorail, I want to focus on the regional and federal support that is waiting the county and state when we are ready. There is real leadership being shown by the General Assembly and the federal delegation to ensure we are able to press the state to do their utmost to secure as much of the \$66 billion for rail included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (also known as the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act). This leadership by the General Assembly has materialized in the state recently starting work to create a capital program for the Brunswick Line to position the state for larger federal investments and enhance service frequencies, bi-directional service, and all day service over the next 20-years. The state is expected to generate near-, medium-, and long-term capital projects that will generate incremental gains during this period. This is in line with the [Capital Region Rail Vision](#), a product of the Partnership, but developed through supported and buy-in from a broad regional leadership group.

Expansion of MARC’s service also provides great benefit to Upcounty, as well as Frederick County and Western Maryland. It will not just provide new transportation options into the DMV’s central core, but also enable new economic development and employer relocation/location decisions through TOD near each of these stations. These suburban station locations are ripe as employers are examining dispersed employee worksite decisions post-pandemic.

We believe a re-examination of the potential benefit from frequent bi-direction seven day per week MARC service is warranted before this product is finalized.

Best Regards,  
Joe

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**From:** McGowan, Jesse <[jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 5, 2021 5:28 PM

**To:** Joe McAndrew <jmcaudrew@greaterwashingtonpartnership.com>

**Cc:** McVary, Jessica <Jessica.McVary@montgomeryplanning.org>; Reed, Patrick <patrick.reed@montgomeryplanning.org>

**Subject:** Public Hearing Draft Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan

**\*\*\* This is an external email \*\*\***

Joe,

On behalf of the Montgomery County Planning Board, I am pleased to transmit the Public Hearing Draft of Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan. This Functional Master Plan is an amendment to the 2013 *Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan* and the 2018 *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*. It also amends *The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties*, as amended, as well as several master and sector plans within the midcounty and upcounty communities. The Public Hearing Draft can be viewed at: [https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Corridor-Forward-Public-Hearing-Draft\\_Final.pdf](https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Corridor-Forward-Public-Hearing-Draft_Final.pdf).

Corridor Forward: the I-270 Transit Plan contains an examination of and recommendations for a transit network, which includes both a near-term network of dedicated bus lanes and an ambitious long-term recommendation for an extension of Metrorail's Red Line. The near-term network of dedicated bus lanes builds on existing master planned projects, including the MD 355 and Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects to create a transit network that serves communities and employment centers along the I-270 corridor. The Draft Plan includes additional recommendations to support the proposed transit network as well as strengthen regional connectivity. Corridor Forward re-envisions the master planned Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) as a network of more buildable dedicated bus lanes, known as the Corridor Connectors, which connect I-270 corridor communities to the county's existing and planned rapid transit network.

The Planning Board's public hearing will be held on Thursday, December 9, 2021 in our auditorium at 2425 Reedy Drive in Wheaton. Written testimony can be sent to the Planning Board Chairman at [mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org). Persons wishing to testify at the public hearing are requested to sign up online beginning ten days prior to the hearing date at <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/>.

If you have any questions, please contact myself or Patrick Reed.

Sincerely,

Jesse Cohn McGowan

**Jesse Cohn McGowan, AICP**  
Transportation Planner Coordinator

Montgomery County Planning Department  
th



2425 Reddie Drive, 13 floor, Wheaton, MD 20902  
[jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org)  
o: 301.495.2197

**From:** [Coello, Catherine](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Testimony This evening  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 1:57:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [Testimony for 12.9.21 Corridor Forward Hearing.pdf](#)

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**From:** Bob Eisinger <president@thehighroadfoundation.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 1:54 PM  
**To:** Coello, Catherine <catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org>  
**Cc:** Steve Silverman <Steve.silverman@ssgovrelations.com>  
**Subject:** Testimony This evening

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Catherine

Attached is my testimony for the Hearing tonight on The Corridor Forward Plan. I wasn't aware I needed to send this in advance. I will try to set up one network map during the presentation, but I may not. I will also shorten this and make minor modifications s the 3 minutes proceeds.

Bob

 **THE HIGH ROAD  
FOUNDATION**  
Robert O. Eisinger/ President  
451 Hungerford Drive, Suite 700  
Rockville, MD 20850  
Cell: 301-370-4197

## **EISINGER TESTIMONY TO DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> HEARING BEFORE THE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE 270 CORRIDOR FORWARD STUDY**

I believe determining the viability of a transportation corridor requires just one issue to be resolved at the very beginning: whether the ground is Available, and here is why.

The ground determines about 30% of the total cost of a transportation project, whether it is an expansion outside the right of way of an existing system or acquisition of a new right of way.

The ground constrains:

1. The timing of the project, i.e. when it will be started and completed and opened
2. The environmental effects of the project, which are usually always negative re SWM
3. The type of transit mode available for the project: Metal wheel Light/heavy rail or rubber wheel BRT or some other rubber wheel technology
4. The amount of underground utilities it will affect and the cost of relocating same
5. And as I stated: It significantly increases the Total Construction Cost

If you remove these ground variables from the cost of the transportation project, one spectacular element occurs:

You significantly reduce the construction costs, time required to complete and the budget contingencies.

The PURPLE line has been stalled for exactly these contingences: ground acquisition extended the schedule, coordinating ground utilities caused additional specific costs and extended the schedule, all scheduling issues led to a large increase in the interest costs. Minimizing schedule and finance risks is key to a successful project, removing ground issues does this.

Let's ignore the environmental storm water elements, the anticipated opening date uncertainty, and the underground utility cost and just talk about one aspect: Total Cost.

I have a Commercial Development company. If we could remove 30% of the total cost from each project, ever project we did would be a financial home run, but boy, if you could remove the ground costs that is exactly what you do!

Well, guess what, that can be done by elevating a transit mode over an existing publicly owned transportation corridor. You can remove more than 30% of the construction costs from the Outset. All you need to do is elevate it over ground you already own. Air Rights! Heard of that?

In Virginia they elevated portions of the Silver Line over existing public ground. You also can dodge underground utilities in certain cases and with certain modes by doing that.

Now metal wheel transit is very heavy and requires a lot of width and a lot of concrete support structure. The cost and environmental effects of that can be enormous. But what if a technology existed that had one third of that weight and one third of the support structure and was rubber wheel? What if the technology requires smaller structure footprints and caused significantly less environmental stormwater damage? What if it was flexible as to where you put the supports, so you dodge underground utilities easily and what if the structure was built off site and then erected at night, reducing the negative impact during construction on existing traffic..... Wouldn't that be a blessing???

What if your own state MDOT had done a study which showed that this rubber wheeled transit mode was viable, even using the wrong and inappropriately negative input assumptions? And I can attest that they did use erroneous data which significantly reduced the benefit of the mode, without any doubt, yet they still concluded that the mode was economic and equally cost comparable to light rail.

In our opinion, and the opinion of experts in the field, and the bulk of your constituency that we have met with, here is your least expensive, shortest construction time, and highest capacity transit Network for the entire county and environs:

A Monorail network:

1. Frederick to SG Red Line
2. Metropolitan Grove thru LSC to SG RED Line on southern CCT
3. SG Red Line down Rockville Pike to Bethesda
4. Strathmore thru Rockledge across the AL Bridge to Tysons.
5. Metropolitan Grove to The Muirkirk Station across the ICC
6. This cross connects Frederick to Metro, and the MARC rail and the Silver Line with Metro and the MARC rail and connects two separate MARC systems

\*You own or control almost all the ground now, at least 98% of it.

\*It will be totally grade separated from all existing traffic, and therefore has

\*Minimal interference with existing traffic during construction and after construction

\*It has limited ground disturbance and minimal to no impact on underground or overhead utilities

\*Topography is not an issue, we engineered it to make sure the 6% grade limitation was attainable for the entire system

\*The cost can be budgeted to within 95% of true cost at the very beginning

\*You limit the land acquisition contingency from your budget and the timing variables

\*You are not reengineering and spending exorbitant design dollars on reconfiguring highway intersections which increases the construction time and cost, of a BRT for example

\*You are not causing storm water runoff

\*You have complete flexibility in where you want it in the existing right way, it can be moved from side to side of the highway at will depending on the existing r planned density in the corridor

\*The entire system can be constructed in 10 years, subject to regional approval process

\*It is essentially independent of weather year-round and therefore reliable

\*It has a useful life of at least 50 years, while infrastructure can be designed for a 100-year useful life.

\*Because it can be accurately budgeted at the outset, the P3 structure can be successfully implemented without unacceptable contingencies and more easily financed

\*It will provide the best image possible to attract employers and workers to the County and the region

And most importantly: It will set an example nationally of an Environmentally sensitive and cost-efficient transportation system that is State of the Art and showcase the legitimacy of Montgomery County as a leader nationally in land planning.

**There is no other transit mode that offers these characteristics.**

Interim BRT can be utilized to span the 10 years on existing right of ways, without modifications to existing interchanges and impacts on existing traffic. The useful life of a BRT is about 10-12 years anyway.

1. Building the first Monorail leg, down from Frederick starts the network. This implements the Corridor Forward Vision that your staff is looking for, much better than any of their recommended options

Once that leg is built, It, by itself, creates the passenger demand and loads the second segment:

2. The Lower CCT of Metropolitan Grove thru the LSC (modified to connect the Universities at SG) to the SG Red Line without a separate bus loop

Those two Passenger loads then push toward the third segment:

3. SG Red Line down Rockville Pike to Bethesda

And then that segment loads the fourth segment:

4. Strathmore thru Rockledge across the AL Bridge to Tysons.

While a supplemental fifth segment can be implemented at will:

5. Metropolitan Grove across the Intercounty Connector to the Muirkirk Metro Station which cross connects the two MARC Rails with the Monorail and with the Metro Red Line.

One last thing: MDOT determined that the cost per mile of a monorail is equal to or less than a surface light rail system, and three times LESS expensive than heavy rail. That does not include ground costs, so remove another 30% from the cost of a monorail. Supplement that with the fact that a monorail carries 5 times the number of passengers per hour than a light rail, and about the same number as a heavy rail metro.

If we had made the Purple Line a monorail, rather than a surface light rail, you would have achieved a system that carried 5 times the number of passenger per hour for the same cost, therefore 1/5<sup>th</sup> cost per passenger enhancing its ability to reduce fares and at the same time, provide incredible future capacity to a system that will now have to be replaced at public expense sometime in the future. But don't forget, it also would have dodged the utility relocation costs: the initial contractor described the Purple Line project as nothing more than that: a utility relocation project. Also don't forget, you would have built the structure offsite and significantly reduced the pedestrian and traffic interference and the safety of the system during and after its construction. You could have also taken the mode directly into the lobby of the new library in Silver Spring, like the Hotel at Disney world, since it is electric and does not require overhead canary wires and has no air quality concerns., in lieu of cutting an exterior section out of the building and running the mode alongside it outside, we could have had the first state of art example in Montgomery County.



The staff's recommendations all require significant ground acquisition. In fact, most it may not even be able to be acquired, as the CSX right of way to Germantown. The thought or recommendation of such an extension is literally a waste of effort and has delayed any thought of having a system in place for the public in the foreseeable future.

Their further recommendation of keeping all transit extensions within the county is completely flawed. The traffic coming down from Frederick is penetrating our local roads and impacting our congestion. If you ignore Frederick, you have totally lost all planning rationality, IMHO.

In summary, our public sector here is not thinking appropriately, rationally, economically, nor practically, and you are completely missing reality. Why in the world would you guide your staff to anything so environmentally insensitive as the only recourse being to force the state to widen the footprint of I 270, and further damage our Ag Preserve, or create recommendations that "can-never happen in our lifetimes", like the extension of Metro to within the county only? Why?

When you have available an international team of experts on all transit modes that have analyzed all of it, prepared traffic studies, fare studies, demand study, economic studies, and concluded the fastest to market, less expensive, longest life span option, significantly less expensive PER PASSENGER of any option is MONORAIL?

And then the staff discarded it. Not real smart in my humble opinion. Sorry.

**From:** [Christina Autin](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Subject:** Comments - Corridor Forward  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 1:50:55 PM  
**Attachments:** [HOC Testimony - I-270 Transit Plan - Public .pdf](#)

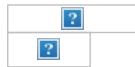
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Good Afternoon,

Attached please find comments regarding Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan from the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County.

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**Christina Autin**  
Director of Legislative & Public Affairs  
Legislative and Public Affairs

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December 9, 2021

***Via Email - [mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org)***

The Honorable Casey Anderson, Chairman  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reddie Drive, 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan Public Hearing

Dear Chairman Anderson,

On behalf of the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County staff, thank you for the opportunity to share comments and affirm our general support for the direction of Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan. We thank the Planning Board and staff for working to create a cohesive strategy for connecting communities along the I-270 corridor. As Montgomery County's housing authority and one of its most active and invested developers and operators of affordable housing, we are supportive of Corridor Forward's broad commitment to community equity in alignment with the county's social equity principles and the specific goal to create affordable housing in areas where new transit may increase rents.

We are furthermore encouraged by the steps Planning has taken to prioritize Equity Focus Areas in transit planning – recognizing the responsibility it bears to develop plans, policies, and regulations that benefit all community members and reduce or eliminate inequity. The Corridor Forward plan clearly embraces that focus on equity in prioritizing the MD 355/Frederick Road BRT services and the Lakeforest and Montgomery Village Connector, which will create critical service connections for the Montgomery Village Equity Focus Area, including HOC's Cider Mill property. As you may be aware, HOC acquired Cider Mill in 2018 to ensure those units were preserved as affordable for the long-term and to alleviate the rent burden that many under resourced households in that community faced.

As housers, we know that leveraging transportation infrastructure and public transit investments is a key component of developing vibrant communities and helping people reach their fullest potential - giving residents robust transit options close to home increases their access to employment and other resources across Montgomery County. While we applaud the efforts to identify and improve the Montgomery Village community's regional access via the Corridor Forward recommendations, we believe there are additional opportunities to address the critical need for transit connectivity for other Equity Focus Areas that would require minimal but impactful changes to the plan. Two such communities are census tracts containing The Willows and Emory Grove Village in Gaithersburg, MD.

The Willows in Gaithersburg is in a designated Equity Focus Area where 61.1 percent of residents are low income and 92.9 percent of households are families of color. The area serves many low to moderate-

income households, including affordable housing at HOC's property, The Willows, as well as numerous voucher households and nearly 1,000 naturally occurring affordable units. As it stands, the route for the new proposed dedicated BRT lanes misses this entire community and a substantial opportunity to serve low-income and families of color with transit where they live. We strongly recommend rerouting toward I-270 to reach this Equity Focus Area directly or prioritizing a long-term solution that will provide a connection to the substantial transit hub planned on the west side of I-270 at Route 124.

Emory Grove Village in Gaithersburg is also located in a designated Equity Focus Area where 31.7 percent of households are low income and 64.8 percent are families of color. Moreover, the history of urban renewal which failed to deliver on the promise of investment in communities like Emory Grove still stands to be corrected. While HOC and others are prepared to support future community investments here, creating a spur to serve this community with rapid transit options will constitute a significant step toward advancing equitable solutions for communities that have experienced disconnection and disinvestment by past planning and development decisions.

We urge Planning to carefully consider these suggestions as they are key changes that will serve to correct historic social and racial inequities and bolster Corridor Forward's commitment to advancing community equity.

HOC greatly appreciates the opportunity to share these comments with the Planning Board and looks forward to collaborating with staff on this and other efforts that serve the residents of Montgomery County.

**DocuSigned by:**

Respectfully,



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Kayline Brown

Acting Executive Director

**From:** [Matt Baker](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#)  
**Cc:** [McGowan, Jesse](#); [Reed, Patrick](#); [McVary, Jessica](#); [Tim Smith](#); [Leonora Conti](#); [Erica Rigby](#); [Derek Gunn](#); [Kandese Holford](#); [David Schlie](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Public Hearing Draft Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 1:24:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Chair Anderson-

Please find MDOT SHA's written comments on the *Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan* public hearing draft below.

#### General Comments

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- As noted in the draft plan, the six retained transit options and the three retained for further evaluation—Managed Lanes Enhanced Commuter Bus, Red Line Extension, and the CCT—all include trade-offs in which implementing one or more options may increase ridership on some existing and proposed transit services while decreasing ridership on others. (As do the already-in-planning MD 355 BRT and Veirs Mill Road BRT projects.) Ultimately, if the County's and draft plan's goal is to shift travel preferences from single-occupancy vehicles to transit choices, it will be critical to understand the overall impact of a given recommendation or combination thereof to ridership and travel times and consequently to reducing vehicular travel, both at a regional/countywide level and in specific smaller geographies proposed to be served.
- This draft plan acknowledges further progress toward implementing plan recommendations will require more in-depth analysis. MDOT SHA recommends, at the appropriate time, responsible agencies develop a more in-depth understanding of how these plan recommendations affect fiscal constraint—what revenue is anticipated and what costs are anticipated—within the more general scope of funding availability over future years *and* within the more specific scope of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) *Visualize 2045* long-range transportation plan, inclusion in which will be necessary if federal funding is to be sought.
- Plan recommendations that include converting general purpose lanes (on both MDOT SHA and County roadways) to bus-only lanes for purposes of BRT will need to be justified through various performance metrics, including peak-period speeds and peak-period travel time for all travel modes as well as the percentage of VMT operating in congested conditions. This draft plan's recommendations for future BRT and lane repurposing largely are driven by reducing VMT, which alone may not be an appropriate metric. VMT can be, among other things, a measure of population and employment growth and economic activity, upward or downward. Reducing VMT does not, though, inherently equate to improved operations of any given transportation mode.

MDOT SHA encourages future iterations of this plan and/or efforts to implement this draft plan's recommendations support options that increase person throughput, which BRT can provide if implemented appropriately. It should be noted, though, that BRT implementation, especially converting existing general purpose lanes, could result in unintended consequences such as increased vehicular congestion and rerouting of vehicular trips via both regional routes such as I-270 and local routes and communities not intended to serve non-local tripmaking. Ultimately, the County, MDOT SHA where applicable, and other stakeholders will need to determine the appropriate balance. (This draft plan acknowledges the need for more specific studies on p. 45.)

- Existing BRT operations in Montgomery County operate variously in mixed traffic and in dedicated lanes due to operational and right-of-way issues. While MDOT SHA understands the draft plan's desire to focus on dedicated BRT lanes, MDOT SHA also encourages the plan to consider interim or ultimate options that operate in mixed traffic if it may ease or speed implementation and/or realize similar travel time and ridership results.
- While possibly outside the specific scope of this draft plan, MDOT SHA recommends consideration be given to what provisions should be made for bicycle infrastructure and how it may interact with dedicated bus lanes, which may present competing needs for limited right-of-way as well as conflicts that raise safety-related concerns.
- MDOT SHA recommends future iterations of this plan and/or efforts to implement this draft plan's recommendations fully account for current and future travel patterns, which are evolving based on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and consequent changes to workplace arrangements. These impacts are especially acute concerning telework arrangements at federal agencies that employ a significant number of persons in the Washington region and that traditionally encouraged transit use through fare subsidy programs.
- MDOT SHA recommends future iterations of this plan and/or efforts to implement this draft plan's recommendations consider ongoing modal shifts toward the use of ridesharing, bicycle/scooter sharing, and other on-demand services that may affect fixed-route transit service ridership. (This draft plan acknowledges the need to account for infrastructure for such users on p. 44, table 13.)

#### Chapter 4 – Initial Evaluation

- p. 19, footnote 1 – While the state, represented by MDOT, plays a key stakeholder role in developing the “Constrained Long-Range Plan,” this document actually is developed and maintained by the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB). Please replace “state’s” with “National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board’s.” In addition, TPB no longer refers to the Constrained Long-Range Plan by that name. Since the adoption of its current long-range transportation plan, *Visualize 2045*, TPB refers to the “constrained element” of *Visualize 2045*.
- p. 22 – Regarding the draft plan's proposed Purple Line Extension, projected ridership (5,500 trips per day) may not justify the cost to construct the line itself or construct a new American Legion Bridge in such a manner as to accommodate rail infrastructure. Limited available right-of-way on the Maryland side of the bridge also present complications. Managed Lanes

Enhanced Commuter Bus service (pp. 26-27) may be a more practical and realistic solution to providing a transit connection between Maryland and Virginia.

- pp. 22-23 – This draft plan’s discussion of enhancing MARC Brunswick Line service focuses solely on needs to and from upcounty and Frederick County destinations. The line also serves points west of Point of Rocks, including Brunswick and Martinsburg, West Virginia, and proposals have been voiced to extend service to other point north and west. While likely outside the scope of this draft plan, please be aware any alterations to MARC Brunswick Line service south and east of Point of Rocks may have impacts—potentially negative—to provision of services north and west of Point of Rocks.
- p. 23 – Clarify that CSX Transportation owns the Old Main Line Subdivision, which is used by MARC Brunswick Line service to Frederick between Point of Rocks and Frederick Junction, at which point the MDOT-owned Frederick Branch extends into Frederick, itself.
- pp. 25-26 – This draft plan recognizes better transit solutions may exist than the existing separated-roadway CCT concept. Consider whether this plan agrees with past and current County transportation priorities, especially as stated in the County’s transportation priorities letters submitted to MDOT as well as the County’s advocacy that a portion of managed lane revenues be used to design and/or construct the CCT. Is this plan suggesting that such revenues be used toward a modified CCT option, is this plan not in agreement with the County’s previously espoused priorities, or is this plan suggesting the County’s priorities have evolved?
- pp. 27-28 – The proposed Red Line extension to Germantown Town Center, in some ways, duplicates MARC Brunswick Line service. Consider how these two services may compete for limited right-of-way while providing partially overlapping service needs and whether pursuing one option may preclude pursuing another. (This draft plan appears, on p. 49, ultimately to recommend extending WMATA Red Line Metrorail to Germantown is preferable to increasing MARC Brunswick Line service.)

## Chapter 5 – Proposed Transit Network

- p. 32 – MDOT SHA supports options that reduce and/or eliminate the need for additional infrastructure, i.e., an I-270 interchange at Dorsey Mill Road/Century Boulevard, through alternative routing options.
- p. 35 – MDOT SHA encourages Great Seneca Connector options that reduce impacts associated with new infrastructure “where no roadway exists today” and recommends future coordination between implementing agencies and MDOT SHA concerning the best manner in which to use the existing I-270 park-and-ride lot at MD 124 to support future transit services.
- pp. 38-40 – Repurposing existing MDOT SHA roadway lanes, including along MD 27, MD 28, MD 118, MD 119, MD 121, and MD 124 for purposes of dedicated bus lanes would require additional analysis as recommended previously.
- p. 42 – When roadways are reconstructed or reimagined for purposes of BRT and dedicated bus lanes, MDOT SHA supports and encourages, whether on MDOT SHA or County roadways, provisions be made to accommodate all vulnerable users in line with the State’s and County’s

Vision Zero policies.

## Chapter 6 – Implementation Strategies

- p. 45-50 – While this draft plan presents staged strategies by which to implement its recommendations, it does not propose specific timelines—likely due to full funding for project development and implementation not yet having been identified. Consider whether timeframes, especially for more near-term improvements, should be included, whether ranges or specific years by which this draft plan envisions completing specific improvements.
- p. 49 – If this plan ultimately recommends extending WMATA Red Line Metrorail service and not enhancing MARC Brunswick Line service, consider stating this as such, especially given potentially competing needs for the same rights-of-way.

Thank you for providing MDOT SHA the opportunity to comment. If you, the Planning Board, Planning Department staff should have any questions, please contact Mr. David Schlie, MDOT SHA Regional Planner, at 410-545-5674 or [dschlie@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:dschlie@mdot.maryland.gov). Mr. Schlie will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

Matt Baker

### Matt Baker

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**From:** McGowan, Jesse <[jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:jesse.mcgowan@montgomeryplanning.org)>

**Sent:** Friday, November 5, 2021 5:13 PM

**To:** Leonora Conti <[LConti@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:LConti@mdot.maryland.gov)>; Erica Rigby <[ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:ERigby@mdot.maryland.gov)>; Derek Gunn <[DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:DGunn@mdot.maryland.gov)>; Kandese Holford <[KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:KHolford@mdot.maryland.gov)>

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**Subject:** Public Hearing Draft Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan

Dear Mr. Smith:

On behalf of the Montgomery County Planning Board, I am pleased to transmit the Public Hearing Draft of Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan. This Functional Master Plan is an amendment to the 2013 *Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan* and the 2018 *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*. It also amends *The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development*



of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended, as well as several master and sector plans within the midcounty and upcounty communities. The Public Hearing Draft can be viewed at: [https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Corridor-Forward-Public-Hearing-Draft\\_Final.pdf](https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Corridor-Forward-Public-Hearing-Draft_Final.pdf).

Corridor Forward: the I-270 Transit Plan contains an examination of and recommendations for a transit network, which includes both a near-term network of dedicated bus lanes and an ambitious long-term recommendation for an extension of Metrorail's Red Line. The near-term network of dedicated bus lanes builds on existing master planned projects, including the MD 355 and Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects to create a transit network that serves communities and employment centers along the I-270 corridor. The Draft Plan includes additional recommendations to support the proposed transit network as well as strengthen regional connectivity. Corridor Forward re-envisions the master planned Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) as a network of more buildable dedicated bus lanes, known as the Corridor Connectors, which connect I-270 corridor communities to the county's existing and planned rapid transit network.

The Planning Board's public hearing will be held on Thursday, December 9, 2021 in our auditorium at 2425 Reedy Drive in Wheaton. Written testimony can be sent to the Planning Board Chairman at [mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org). Persons wishing to testify at the public hearing are requested to sign up online beginning ten days prior to the hearing date at <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/>.

If you have any questions, please contact myself or Patrick Reed ([patrick.reed@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:patrick.reed@montgomeryplanning.org)).

Sincerely,  
Jesse Cohn McGowan



**Jesse Cohn McGowan, AICP**  
**Transportation Planner Coordinator**

Montgomery County Planning Department  
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**From:** [Josh Bokee](#)  
**To:** [MCP-Chair](#); [Reed, Patrick](#); [McVary, Jessica](#)  
**Subject:** Corridor Forward: Written Comments / Joshua Bokee  
**Date:** Thursday, December 9, 2021 8:42:10 AM  
**Attachments:** [Corridor Forward Testimony - Joshua Bokee \(1\).pdf](#)

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Chair Anderson,  
Good morning. Please find attached my written comments for submission on the staff draft of the Corridor Forward plan which is now under consideration by the Montgomery County Planning Board. Thank you in advance for the opportunity to comment on this plan and thank you and the planning staff for your good work within Montgomery County.

Josh

--

Josh Bokee  
301-452-2270 cell

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December 9, 2021

Mr. Casey Anderson  
Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
2425 Reddie Drive  
Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan

Dear Mr. Anderson,

I am writing to the Montgomery County Planning Board to submit comments regarding the proposed staff draft of the Corridor Forward: I-270 Transit Plan as presented for public hearing on December 9, 2021. The Corridor Forward plan is both thoughtful and innovative in presenting future transit options that would maintain a strong focus on equity, tie together the future residential and economic needs of the area as well as offer vehicular traffic relief for a growing region.

I am a resident of the City of Frederick; however, I work throughout the region and like many know firsthand the challenges of today's traffic environment. I also serve as a member of Frederick County's Transportation Services Advisory Council (TSAC) whose purpose is to make formal recommendations to the County Executive and the County Council about all modes of transportation, with a specific focus on transit related objectives. Please note that my written comments are my own and I am not representing TSAC or any other business or organization.

As a former member of the City of Frederick's Board of Aldermen (city council) as well as prior resident of Montgomery County; I am strong believer in taking a regional approach to transportation solutions. The Corridor Forward plan is holistic in its thinking to the challenges of the 270 corridor, especially in its focus on how each transit option would help solve the unmet needs of Montgomery County as well how each would have positive regional benefits as well.

For your consideration, I would recommend that both the Red Line extension to Germantown AND Enhanced MARC Rail be included together as your recommended long term (15 years+) transit options. It is understandable why staff would recommend the Red Line option as the best long term 'bet' for reducing vehicular miles driven by connecting via rail the Up County with Rockville, Bethesda and

ultimately Washington, D.C. A Red Line extension would have the benefit of potentially increasing density within Germantown, creating a true post-suburban town center environment.

Normally, I would concur that only one long term option should be considered. However, adding Enhanced MARC Rail to your 15 year+ recommendation has the benefit of pulling in regional support for a transit solution that has both meaningful impact (ridership) as well as reasonable cost affordability (as compared to other considered options). Including Enhanced MARC Rail in the final Corridor Forward recommendations would have the added benefit of helping to serve as a signal to Frederick County that it would have a partner in advocating for much needed improvements to this rail line.

Including BOTH the Red Line Extension and Enhanced MARC Rail as Corridor Forward's 15 year+ recommendations would complement the stated objectives both within and surrounding Montgomery County.

Montgomery and Frederick counties are inextricably linked together – indeed, the City of Frederick and Bethesda are both, respectively, the northern and southern anchors of the “270 Technology Corridor.” The Corridor Forward plan builds on that interconnectedness now, and into the future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Joshua Bokee*

Joshua Bokee  
[jbokee@gmail.com](mailto:jbokee@gmail.com)