

Master Plan of Highways and Transitways - 2024 Technical Update - Public Hearing #3 - Correspondence

From: [Amol Buche](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: KEEP M83 in the master plan
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:10:55 PM

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

*Dear Planning Board Members:
M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is integral to the development of Upcounty including Clarksburg, Germantown area residents. It provides a multi-modal direct connection from Clarksburg to Shady Grove Metro, and provides a much needed support to the traffic needs for the area. It is also vital for the development of the planned economic centers in the now defunct Lakeforest Mall area, in addition to regular transportation needs. Having only MD 355 to support Clarksburg and upcountry traffic is hardly sustainable. MD 355 is routinely backed up and local residents cannot even enter into mD 355 from the streets that feed into 355, causing needless delays, air pollution and lost time and wages to the people in the area.
Clarksburg has grown from a community of 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents now, with more construction of homes ongoing. It continues to grow at a rapid pace. The transportation infrastructure is sorely lacking. Removing sections of M-83 will adversely impact the quality of life for current and future residents of Clarksburg in particular and Upcounty in general. Please keep M-83 in the Master Plan.*

*Amol Buche
Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)*

From: [Jyotin Shah](#)
To: Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov; [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: KEEP M83 in the master plan
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:28:28 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Members,

M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is essential to the development of Upcounty, including the Clarksburg and Germantown areas. M-83 provides a multi-modal, direct connection from Clarksburg to the Shady Grove Metro, meeting critical transportation needs for the region. Additionally, it supports the planned economic revitalization of areas like the former Lakeforest Mall, alongside regular transportation needs. Relying solely on MD 355 to serve Clarksburg and Upcounty traffic is not sustainable. MD 355 frequently experiences significant congestion, making it challenging for local residents to access the road from feeder streets, leading to unnecessary delays, increased air pollution, and lost time and wages for the people in the area.

Clarksburg has grown from a community of 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents today, with more residential development underway. This rapid growth has outpaced the current transportation infrastructure, which is now critically insufficient. Removing sections of M-83 would negatively impact the quality of life for both current and future residents of Clarksburg and Upcounty. Therefore, I urge you to retain M-83 in the Master Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jyotin Shah Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)

From: [Hong Ge](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Keep M83 in the master plan
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:34:04 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Members,

M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is essential to the development of Upcounty, including the Clarksburg and Germantown areas. M-83 provides a multi-modal, direct connection from Clarksburg to the Shady Grove Metro, meeting critical transportation needs for the region. Additionally, it supports the planned economic revitalization of areas like the former Lakeforest Mall, alongside regular transportation needs. Relying solely on MD 355 to serve Clarksburg and Upcounty traffic is not sustainable. MD 355 frequently experiences significant congestion, making it challenging for local residents to access the road from feeder streets, leading to unnecessary delays, increased air pollution, and lost time and wages for the people in the area.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Hong Ge
Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)
Sent from my iPhone

From: camleger@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Liz Gould-Leger](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:37:09 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Liz Gould-Leger
10301 Duvawn Pl Silver Spring, MD 20902-4827
camleger@gmail.com

From: [Melissa](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Nov. 14, 2024, Midcounty HWY Extension Plan (M-83), and Beauvoir Boulevard
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:37:33 PM

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

NO to Midcounty HWY Extension Plan (M-83)

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Melissa Steenson and I live at 17312 Beauvoir Boulevard in Mill Creek Towne.

I would like to ask for the **elimination** of the plan to extend Midcounty Highway southward past Shady Grove Road (M-83 portion).

Our house is the second one down from the beautiful and peaceful woods that would be destroyed in such an extension.

This narrow stretch of woods shelters a variety of wildlife, which I have personally seen, including: mink, foxes, raccoons, stags, does and speckled fawns; as well as crayfish and turtles that come up from Mill Creek to lay eggs in the spring.

These woods which would fall to a 4-lane highway are also the habitat of red-shouldered hawks and barred owls that raise their young in those woods, as well as migrating warblers, spring peepers, green frogs and tree frogs.

Furthermore, the green spaces need to be preserved for the well-being of adults and children.

My school-aged children walk our dog along those woods. Children from Mill Creek South come through those woods to get to the neighborhood pool.

A 4-lane highway tearing through our neighborhood would be dangerous to pedestrians and divide a community.

Please remove the proposed extension of MidCounty Highway (M-83) past Shady Grove!!!

Sincerely,

Melissa Steenson

From: [Ginamarie Lynch](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Midcounty HWY Extension Plan (M-83)
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:37:57 PM

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

This comment is intended for the November 14th public hearing about whether to keep the M-83 extension included in the County Plan.

My name is Ginamarie Lynch and this is my mailing address: 9237 English Meadow Way Gaithersburg MD 20882

Please remove any plans to extend Midcounty Highway to Ridge Road and MD-200. This plan would cut right through heavily forested areas on both ends and negatively affect residents of the areas.

Thank you,
Gina

From: [Ketan Ganatra](#)
To: Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov; [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Keep M83 in the master plan
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:43:35 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Members,

M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is essential to the development of Upcounty, including the Clarksburg and Germantown areas. M-83 provides a multi-modal, direct connection from Clarksburg to the Shady Grove Metro, meeting critical transportation needs for the region.

Additionally, it supports the planned economic revitalization of areas like the former Lakeforest Mall, alongside regular transportation needs. Relying solely on MD 355 to serve Clarksburg and Upcounty traffic is not sustainable. MD 355 frequently experiences significant congestion, making it challenging for local residents to access the road from feeder streets, leading to unnecessary delays, increased air pollution, and lost time and wages for the people in the area.

Clarksburg has grown from a community of 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents today, with more residential development underway. This rapid growth has outpaced the current transportation infrastructure, which is now critically insufficient. Removing sections of M-83 would negatively impact the quality of life for both current and future residents of Clarksburg and Upcounty. Therefore, I urge you to retain M-83 in the Master Plan. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ketan Ganatra
Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)

From: [Shubh Labh](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: M83 in Master Plan
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:46:29 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Members,

M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is essential to the development of Upcounty, including the Clarksburg and Germantown areas. M-83 provides a multi-modal, direct connection from Clarksburg to the Shady Grove Metro, meeting critical transportation needs for the region.

Additionally, it supports the planned economic revitalization of areas like the former Lakeforest Mall, alongside regular transportation needs. Relying solely on MD 355 to serve Clarksburg and Upcounty traffic is not sustainable. MD 355 frequently experiences significant congestion, making it challenging for local residents to access the road from feeder streets, leading to unnecessary delays, increased air pollution, and lost time and wages for the people in the area.

Clarksburg has grown from a community of 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents today, with more residential development underway. This rapid growth has outpaced the current transportation infrastructure, which is now critically insufficient. Removing sections of M-83 would negatively impact the quality of life for both current and future residents of Clarksburg and Upcounty. Therefore, I urge you to retain M-83 in the Master Plan. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rajal Ganatra
Resident of Summerfield Crossing, close to 355

From: [Ketan Ganatra](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Re: Automatic reply: Keep M83 in the master plan
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 9:47:14 PM

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

Mailing address -
Ketan Ganatra
21716 Seneca Ayr Dr, Boyds MD 20841

On Thu, Nov 14, 2024 at 9:43 PM MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org> wrote:

Thank you for contacting the Planning Board Chair's Office. This confirms receipt of your message for distribution to appropriate staff to review. If you have submitted an inquiry, we will respond in a timely manner. You may also leave a voice message at (301) 495-4605 and a staff member will return your call.

If you have submitted written testimony for a Planning Board item, please be sure to include your mailing address to satisfy proper noticing requirements. If this was not already included, please reply to this email with that information. Written testimony submitted before the deadline of 12pm, two business days before the scheduled Planning Board meeting, will be distributed to the Board and staff and included in the public record. Written testimony received after the deadline will only be distributed to staff to review.

For more information about the Chair's Office, please visit:
<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/>

From: j_cushing@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Janet Cushing](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 10:04:39 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. As a frequent visitor/user to Dayspring Retreat Center, a highway anywhere near there would cause environmental harm and ruin the peacefulness of the Center. I doubt the County can afford the compensation to that Center that would be needed for ruining the livelihood of its inhabitants.

M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Janet Cushing
1538 Poplar Grove Dr Reston, VA 20194-1730
j_cushing@yahoo.com

From: [Sen. Scott](#)
To: [Sen. Scott](#)
Subject: INVESTING IN AMERICA: Biden-Harris Administration Makes More Than \$1 Billion in Additional Funding Available to Support America's Passenger Rail Future | US Department of Transportation
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 10:26:16 PM

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

<https://nam11.safelinks.office.com/?url=https://www.transportation.gov/%2Fbriefing-room/%2Fpay-casting-america-biden-harris-administration-makes-more-than-1-billion-additional-funding-available-to-support-america-s-passenger-rail-future>
<mailto:scott@senate.gov>

This is a solution. There is no way that M3 would not decimate down county with that proposed road. Clarksburg could just be a station, maybe it can continue to Fredricks.
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Melissa](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Re: Automatic reply: Nov. 14, 2024, Midcounty HWY Extension Plan (M-83), and Beauvoir Boulevard
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 10:53:50 AM

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

I gave my address, but not the full mailing address with zip code:
Mrs. Melissa Steenson
17312 Beauvoir Blvd.
Derwood, MD 20855

On Thu, Nov 14, 2024 at 9:37 PM MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org> wrote:

Thank you for contacting the Planning Board Chair's Office. This confirms receipt of your message for distribution to appropriate staff to review. If you have submitted an inquiry, we will respond in a timely manner. You may also leave a voice message at (301) 495-4605 and a staff member will return your call.

If you have submitted written testimony for a Planning Board item, please be sure to include your mailing address to satisfy proper noticing requirements. If this was not already included, please reply to this email with that information. Written testimony submitted before the deadline of 12pm, two business days before the scheduled Planning Board meeting, will be distributed to the Board and staff and included in the public record. Written testimony received after the deadline will only be distributed to staff to review.

For more information about the Chair's Office, please visit:
<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/>

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Approved Traditional Latin Masses in our Area:

Sundays:

~ Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America - 9 am

1400 Quincy Street, NE

Washington, DC

~ St. John the Beloved - 12 noon (except fourth Sundays)

6420 Linway Terrace

Mclean, Virginia

~ St. John/Our Lady Queen of Poland - every Sunday 8 am

9700 Rosensteel Avenue

Silver Spring, Maryland

~ St. Rita - 9:15 a.m. (except second Sundays)

3815 Russell Road

Alexandria, VA

~ St. Alphonsus Liguori - 7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., Vespers 3:30 p.m.

114 W Saratoga Street

Baltimore, MD

Every Monday:

~ St. John the Beloved - 8 pm (quiet Low Mass)

6420 Linway Terrace

McLean, Virginia

Every Tuesday and Thursday:

~ St. Rita 7:30 pm (quiet Low Mass)

3815 Russell Road

Alexandria, VA

Every Day:

~ St. Alphonsus Ligouri - Mon.-Sat. 7 a.m. and Tue., Wed., Fri. 12:10 p.m.

114 W Saratoga Street

Baltimore, MD

From: [L.O](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: REMOVE M83 from the master plan
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 10:55:15 AM

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

Dear Planning Board Members:

I am writing to request the Montgomery County Council to formally remove the M-83 (Mid-County Highway Extended) from the county's Master Plan. The construction of M-83, originally envisioned as a new highway extending from I-270 to US 29, is no longer aligned with the County's goals for sustainable development, environmental protection, or smart growth. Removing M-83 from the Master Plan will ensure that resources are focused on more modern, equitable transportation alternatives and will help preserve critical natural and community spaces.

As we know, the M-83 was initially proposed in the 1960s as a response to the rapid suburbanization of Montgomery County. However, over the decades, both the regional transportation landscape and planning priorities have shifted significantly. Current trends favor multi-modal transportation networks that reduce reliance on automobiles, promote walkability, and focus on the environmental sustainability of new projects. In recent years, there has been growing consensus among urban planners, environmental advocates, and community organizations that constructing M-83 would be detrimental to the county's long-term objectives of sustainable development and environmental preservation.

There are several justifications for removing M-83 from the Master Plan. I will list four.

1. Environmental Impact

One of the most significant reasons for removal is the potential environmental harm caused by the highway's construction. M-83 would disrupt several environmentally sensitive areas, including:

- **Forested Areas and Wildlife Habitats:** The proposed route of M-83 runs through sensitive forested areas, which provide critical habitats for native wildlife. Construction would lead to deforestation and fragmentation of these ecosystems.
- **Wetlands and Streams:** The highway's path would also cross over several important wetlands and streams, increasing the risk of habitat loss and waterway pollution.
- **Air and Noise Pollution:** Increased vehicle traffic on M-83 would contribute to air and noise pollution in surrounding neighborhoods, significantly impacting public health.

Given the urgent need to address climate change and preserve natural spaces, it is imperative

to reconsider projects that would harm the county's environment.

2. Shifting Transportation Priorities

The transportation planning landscape has evolved since M-83 was first proposed.

Montgomery County's own **Transportation and Land Use Planning Goals** now prioritize:

- **Public Transit Expansion:** Montgomery County has committed to expanding and improving its public transit network, including bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors, metro expansion, and bike infrastructure. These alternatives provide a more sustainable and efficient means of transportation compared to car-centric highway expansion.
- **Traffic Mitigation over Expansion:** Expanding highways such as M-83 often leads to increased traffic congestion, a phenomenon known as **induced demand**. As traffic increases, so too does the need for further road expansion, creating a vicious cycle. Instead, the county should focus on traffic mitigation strategies that prioritize public transit, pedestrian pathways, and bike lanes.

Removing M-83 would allow resources to be reallocated towards more forward-thinking solutions that align with modern transportation trends.

3. Impact on Communities and Quality of Life

M-83's proposed route would affect many established residential communities. These areas are home to thousands of residents who would experience:

- **Displacement:** In order to accommodate the highway, residential properties would be demolished, displacing families and altering long-standing neighborhoods.
- **Community Fragmentation:** Building a highway through established neighborhoods would divide communities, reducing social cohesion and increasing traffic dangers for pedestrians and cyclists.

In contrast, investing in neighborhood-friendly, multi-modal transportation options would strengthen communities rather than divide them.

4. Financial Considerations

The construction of M-83 would come with substantial financial costs. These include:

- **Initial Construction Costs:** Estimates for the construction of a new highway like M-83 range from hundreds of millions to over a billion dollars.
- **Ongoing Maintenance:** Highways require constant maintenance, including resurfacing, bridge repairs, and general upkeep.

These funds could be better spent on more cost-effective solutions, such as improving public transit infrastructure, enhancing local roadways, and investing in pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which would benefit a broader segment of the population.

Rather than constructing M-83, the following alternative transportation strategies have already been discussed for many years and these align with Montgomery County's sustainable growth objectives:

1. **Public Transit Expansion:** Invest in additional bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors, light rail lines, and improved metro connectivity that would provide convenient, fast, and environmentally friendly alternatives to car travel.
2. **Improved Roadway Networks:** Enhance existing roads, particularly those in the central and eastern portions of the county, to accommodate more vehicles and improve traffic flow without the need for major new highway construction.
3. **Active Transportation Infrastructure:** Develop and expand pedestrian and cycling networks, making it safer and easier for people to get around without relying on cars.
4. **Carpool and Ridesharing Programs:** Promote shared mobility options, such as carpooling, ridesharing, and micro-mobility, to reduce traffic congestion and environmental impact.

By focusing on these alternatives, the county can address transportation needs in a way that minimizes environmental harm, supports healthy communities, and aligns with current transportation trends.

In conclusion, I firmly believe removing M-83 from the Master Plan is the right decision for Montgomery County. It will protect the environment, enhance the quality of life for residents, and help the county move toward a more sustainable, equitable, and innovative transportation future. I urge the Montgomery County Council to take decisive action to remove M-83 from the Master Plan and direct resources toward building a more sustainable and resilient transportation system.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Warm regards,
Laurent Ozbun, PhD

22645 Majestic Elm Ct
Clarksburg, MD 20871

From: [Ginny Barnes](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: M-83 testimony
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 11:12:29 AM
Attachments: [MckW3cvPhd3IB4lw.png](#)

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

For the record -Here is the testimony I gave last night at the hearing. I only had paper copies to give out. Regards.....~g



To: M-NCPPC - Chair Harris and Commissioners
Re: **M-83 Highway - Remove from Master Plan of Highways and Transitways**

M-83 is a relic of another era before we knew the real value of forests vital to both climate and human health. Conservation Montgomery has long supported removal of this 5 mile stretch of proposed highway from the Master Plan. Its value to our environment far outweighs the use for which it was intended. We can't afford to lose what it will take.

The proposed extension will cause irreparable damage to two of our parks: Great Seneca SVP and North Germantown Greenway SVP would lose vital forests, wetlands and further fragmentation of needed habitat. Several other parks are jeopardized including South Valley Park (Montgomery Village Foundation), Blohm Park (City of Gaithersburg) and Wildcat Branch SVP (M-NCPPC). Six streams would be crossed (listed from north to south): Wildcat Branch, Dayspring Creek, Brandermill Tributary, Great Seneca Creek, Whetstone Run and Watkins Run. Long bridge construction would be required over the floodplains of Great Seneca Creek and Brandermill Tributaries. All of these streams contribute to the public water supply intake downstream at the WSSC water filtration plant that provides drinking water to 3 jurisdictions. A portion of the Agricultural Reserve is also impacted.

Given our current knowledge, particularly regarding the value of forests and trees to mitigating CO2 emissions and climate warming, the sum total of losses far outweigh any perceived benefit. We've lost too much forest already since between 2008 and 2016, development in Montgomery County cleared over 1300

acres of forest and replanted only 768 acres, a net loss of 615 forest acres. Preserving forest should be *the top priority* in reversing climate impacts to our region.

This highway proposal is a boondogle and should have been removed decades ago. We need what it would cost more than we need another highway.

Ginny Barnes, *Advocacy Chair*
Conservation Montgomery ~

(301) 762-6423

From: [Mani M. Subramanian](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: KEEP M83 in the Master Plan
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 3:33:50 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Members:

M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is integral to the development of Upcounty including Clarksburg, Germantown area residents. It provides a multi-modal direct connection from Clarksburg to Shady Grove Metro, and provides a much needed support to the traffic needs for the area. It is also vital for the development of the planned economic centers in the now defunct Lakeforest Mall area, in addition to regular transportation needs. Having only MD 355 to support Clarksburg and upcountry traffic is hardly sustainable. MD 355 is routinely backed up and local residents cannot even enter into mD 355 from the streets that feed into 355, causing needless delays, air pollution and lost time and wages to the people in the area.

Clarksburg has grown from a community of 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents now, with more construction of homes ongoing. It continues to grow at a rapid pace. The transportation infrastructure is sorely lacking. Removing sections of M-83 will adversely impact the quality of life for current and future residents of Clarksburg in particular and Upcounty in general. Please keep M-83 in the Master Plan.

-Mani

Mani Subramanian
(240) 575 5169

From: [Atul Ganatra](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: KEEP M83 in the master plan
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 4:56:28 PM

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Dear Planning Board Members,

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Atul Ganatra
Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)

From: [Charu Kamdar](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Keep M 83
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 5:28:47 PM

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

*Dear Planning Board Members:
M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is integral to the development of Upcounty including Clarksburg, Germantown area residents. It provides a multi-modal direct connection from Clarksburg to Shady Gve Metro, and provides a much needed support to the traffic needs for the area. It is also vital for the development of the planned economic centers in the now defunct Lakeforest Mall area, in addition to regular transportation needs. Having only MD 355 to support Clarksburg and upcountry traffic is hardly sustainable. MD 355 is routinely backed up and local residents cannot even enter into mD 355 from the streets that feed into 355, causing needless delays, air pollution and lost time and wages to the people in the area.
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Charu kamdar
Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)

From: [Joann Lee](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#); Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Keep M-83 in the Master Plan
Date: Friday, November 15, 2024 5:47:25 PM

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

Dear Planning Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for retaining M-83 in the Clarksburg Master Plan. M-83 has been part of the master plan since 1960 and essential to the development of Upcounty communities, including Clarksburg and Germantown.

Today, the need for M-83 is more critical than ever. It provides a vital multi-modal, direct connection from Clarksburg to the Shady Grove Metro, addressing the growing transportation needs of the region. Moreover, M-83 supports the planned economic revitalization of key areas, such as the former Lakeforest Mall, while serving the daily transportation demands of the rapidly growing population in the surrounding areas.

Currently, MD 355 is the primary route for Clarksburg and Upcounty traffic, but it is no longer sufficient. Frequent congestion on MD 355 makes access from feeder streets extremely difficult, resulting in significant delays, increased air pollution, and lost time and wages for residents who are already facing economic challenges.

Clarksburg has seen explosive growth, from 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents today, with additional development underway. This rapid expansion has far outpaced the existing infrastructure, creating a critical gap that M-83 is intended to address.

Removing sections of M-83 would have devastating consequences for the Upcounty region, severely impacting the quality of life for current and future residents alike. It would undermine the transportation and economic goals of the area and fail to meet the needs of the ever growing Upcounty Community.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Planning Board to retain M-83 in the Master Plan.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Joann H. Lee

Summerfield Crossing Resident (off 355)

From: [Mani M. Subramanian](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Re: KEEP M83 in the Master Plan
Date: Saturday, November 16, 2024 2:09:16 PM

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

The mailing address is 12839 Gorman Cir, Boyds, MD

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org>
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2024 3:33:50 PM
To: Mani M. Subramanian <mani_murugan@hotmail.com>
Subject: Automatic reply: KEEP M83 in the Master Plan

Thank you for contacting the Planning Board Chair's Office. This confirms receipt of your message for distribution to appropriate staff to review. If you have submitted an inquiry, we will respond in a timely manner. You may also leave a voice message at (301) 495-4605 and a staff member will return your call.

If you have submitted written testimony for a Planning Board item, please be sure to include your mailing address to satisfy proper noticing requirements. If this was not already included, please reply to this email with that information. Written testimony submitted before the deadline of 12pm, two business days before the scheduled Planning Board meeting, will be distributed to the Board and staff and included in the public record. Written testimony received after the deadline will only be distributed to staff to review.

For more information about the Chair's Office, please visit: <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/>

From: [Amit Patani](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: KEEP M83 in the master plan
Date: Sunday, November 17, 2024 11:17:36 AM

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

*Dear Planning Board Members:
M-83 has been included in the Clarksburg Master Plan since 1960. It is integral to the development of Upcounty including Clarksburg, Germantown area residents. It provides a multi-modal direct connection from Clarksburg to Shady Grove Metro, and provides a much needed support to the traffic needs for the area. It is also vital for the development of the planned economic centers in the now defunct Lakeforest Mall area, in addition to regular transportation needs. Having only MD 355 to support Clarksburg and upcountry traffic is hardly sustainable. MD 355 is routinely backed up and local residents cannot even enter into mD 355 from the streets that feed into 355, causing needless delays, air pollution and lost time and wages to the people in the area.
Clarksburg has grown from a community of 10,000 residents in 2010 to over 40,000 residents now, with more construction of homes ongoing. It continues to grow at a rapid pace. The transportation infrastructure is sorely lacking. Removing sections of M-83 will adversely impact the quality of life for current and future residents of Clarksburg in particular and Upcounty in general. Please keep M-83 in the Master Plan.*

Thanks

Amit Patani
Clarksburg Village HOA member
12500 Grand Elm St, Clarksburg MD
Cell #443-864-8042

From: [M Schoenbaum](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Aldrich, Sofia](#)
Subject: written testimony, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways 2024 Technical Update
Date: Sunday, November 17, 2024 1:32:54 PM
Attachments: [M83 written testimony.pdf](#)

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

Attached please find my supplemental written testimony about the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) 2024 Technical Update - specifically in support of removing Midcounty Highway Extended M-83 from the MPOHT.

Thank you,

Miriam Schoenbaum
15004 Clopper Rd
Boys MD 20841

MASTER PLAN OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSITWAYS 2024 TECHNICAL UPDATE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at the public hearing on Thursday, November 14, in favor of removing M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways. I have appended a transcript of my in-person testimony, with the chords (see p. 4).

In this supplemental written testimony, I would like to address two ideas that were mentioned by supporters of M-83 at that public hearing.

1. Great Seneca Highway does not demonstrate the benefits of M-83. It demonstrates the harms of M-83.

- A court ruling in 1989 allowed the county to build Great Seneca Highway through Seneca Creek State Park (see the article appended below on p. 5: “Ruling paves way for highway through Seneca Park,” by Steven C. Fehr, Washington Post, April 12, 1989).
 - Edgar Gonzales was involved in the project.
 - The 1989 article cited the claim that “When finished, the highway should accommodate up to 40,000 vehicles a day, taking many of them off of I-270 and Rtes. 28 and 355.”
 - In reality, Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on this section of Great Seneca Highway has never been higher than 23,000.
 - In reality, Great Seneca Highway did not fix congestion on I-270, MD 28, or MD 355.
- On this section of Great Seneca Highway, drivers get in each other’s way (i.e., there is traffic congestion) for 10-15 hours a week, at most.
- The environmental damage from Great Seneca Highway is 24/7/365.
- The operating and maintenance costs of Great Seneca Highway are 24/7/365.
- During the 90% of the time when drivers can drive on Great Seneca Highway unimpeded by other drivers, the road induces high-speed, dangerous driving. Deaths include (but are not limited to):
 - Northwest High School student Alicia Allen, 15, who was walking to school when she was killed by a driver in January 2002.
 - Three deaths in 2012 (at High Gables Drive, Lakelands Drive, and Longdraft Road) – see <https://patch.com/maryland/gaithersburg/sha-no-plans-to-change-great-seneca-speed-limit>.

MIRIAM SCHOENBAUM
15004 CLOPPER RD
BOYDS MD 20841

- Juan Guerrero-Moreno, 28, who was killed by a driver on August 20, 2024, around 1:13 pm, at High Gables Drive, on a riding lawn mower, while he was working with the crew that mows the median and roadsides.



- Dinora Aleman Amaya, 30, who was killed by a driver on October 7, 2024, around 9:17 pm, at Kentlands Boulevard, while crossing to the RideOn bus stop after work. (Photo from the family's GoFundMe.)



- 2. The people who put M-83 on the master plan of highways in the 1960s did not demonstrate wisdom. They demonstrated hubris and folly.**
- The 1960s were the peak of the highway-building era, which ended with the highway revolts of the 1960s and 1970s.
 - The 1967 Master Plan of Highways, posted at <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/MPOHT-1967.pdf>, which includes M-83, also includes:
 - an Outer Beltway (F-9)
 - an Outer Outer Beltway (F-11)
 - a new north-south freeway west of I-270 (F-12)
 - a new north-south freeway east of Georgia Avenue (F-4, “Northern Parkway”)
 - circumferential arterial highways around Germantown (A-80) and Olney (A-46)
 - In Boyds, according to the 1967 MPOH:
 - White Ground Road was supposed to be a major highway (M-57) with a grade-separated interchange with the F-12 freeway.
 - West Old Baltimore Road was supposed to be an arterial highway (A-7).
 - Hoyles Mill Road was supposed to be an arterial highway (A-254).
 - All three roads are now Exceptional Rustic Roads.
 - In Germantown, the 1967 MPOH includes plans for most the big, high-speed roads that now encourage driving; discourage people from walking, bicycling, or using transit; and prevent successful transit-oriented development:
 - Germantown Road (M-27)
 - Father Hurley Boulevard (M-6)
 - Middlebrook Road (M-85)
 - Crystal Rock Drive (M-84)

**The No M-83 Song (to the tune of “Particle Man” by They Might Be Giants)
Miriam Schoenbaum**

C
M-83, M-83

C **G**
A bad idea that’s older than me

F **C**
Remove it from the MPOHT

C
No M-83

C **F**
Will it alleviate traffic concerns?

G **C**
MCDOT says no

F **G**
Just more drivers, driving more

F **C**
Induced demand, M-83

C
M-83, M-83

C **G**
Worse for traffic than BRT

F **C**
While also increasing VMT

C
M-83

C
M-83, M-83

C **G**
Will split up our communities

F **C**
With asphalt, noise, and SUVs

C
M-83

C **F**
My kid’s new high school cost 150 million

G **C**
M-83 costs 10 times as much

F **G**
10 new high schools or M-83?

F **C**
Boondoggle, M-83

C
M-83, M-83

C **G**
Harms our water quality

F **C**
Hurts our climate resiliency

C
M-83

C **F**
What’s it take to stop M-83?

G **C**
Why is this road even still on the plans?

F **G**
How many hearings will there be?

F **C**
Take it off, M-83

C
M-83, M-83

C **G**
A bad idea that’s older than me

F **C**
Remove it from the MPOHT

C
No M-83

RULING PAVES WAY FOR HIGHWAY THROUGH SENECA PARK

By Stephen C. Fehr
Washington Post
April 12, 1989

A federal appeals court in Richmond has cleared the way for completion of the Great Seneca Highway through Seneca Creek State Park in Montgomery County, nearly ending a five-year legal battle over the largest highway project ever undertaken by the county. A three-judge panel of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in upholding a District Court judge, said Monday that the Montgomery citizens groups seeking to block the four-lane highway waited too long to file their lawsuit. Approving the groups' request for an injunction to halt construction would have been unreasonably costly to Montgomery, the panel said. "Equity demands that those who would challenge the legal sufficiency of administrative decisions concerning time-sensitive public construction projects do so with haste and dispatch," the panel said. "To require any less could well result in a costly disruption of ongoing public planning and construction." The panel's decision means the county can complete a 1.8-mile stretch of the eight-mile highway through about 15 acres of open park land in the 6,000-acre nature preserve. The \$43 million highway, which county officials say will relieve traffic congestion in the growing "upcounty" area, generally snakes from the northern edge of Rockville across the park near Gaithersburg to Germantown. County officials were so confident that they would prevail in the legal challenge that they began construction of the \$11 million section through the park last year. It is the last of three phases of the project and is expected to be finished by December. The two other phases, from Middlebrook Road to Clopper Road and from Rte. 28 to Rte. 124, are open. "We didn't see this as a threat," county engineer Edgar Gonzales said of the lawsuit by the Quince Orchard Valley Citizens Association and the West Riding Citizens Association. "We were certain about the outcome all along." Citing environmental damage from the highway construction, the citizens groups filed the lawsuit in March 1988, nine months after the federal government granted permission for the county to build the highway through the park. The three-judge panel said the nine-month gap was too long. John Walker, a spokesman for the Quince Orchard Valley association, said such legal action takes time. He noted that the appeal has been before the appellate judges for six months. Walker said that the groups initially challenged the highway project in 1984. A second part of the groups' lawsuit, which challenges the environmental analysis of the highway through the park, is pending in U.S. District Court in Baltimore. But Randy Shaheen, attorney for the two associations, said the groups were close to reaching an agreement with the county that would end the lawsuit. County transportation director Robert S. McGarry said the federal appeals court's decision would accelerate the conclusion of the legal battle. Up to now, he said, the county has refrained from talking to residents because of the pending lawsuit. County officials have been hard-pressed to win approval of the project, which first was proposed in the late 1960s. The biggest obstacle had been opposition, on environmental grounds, from the Department of Interior. The agency changed its mind after the county agreed to correct some of the environmental damage, such as building noise barriers. When finished, the highway should accommodate up to 40,000 vehicles a day, taking many of them off of I-270 and Rtes. 28 and 355.

Dale Smith
Remove M83 and Pursue Scenario1
November 17, 2024

Removal of the Remaining M-83 will help the Montgomery County Department of transportation(MCDOT), and all residents of Clarksburg, Gaithersburg and Germantown.

In the Prior Army Corp of Engineers application, the MCDOT chosen Alternative 9A of the mid-county corridor study was not the Least Environmental Damaging Practicable Alternative; interagency disagreements were written concerning proposed actions that pointed-out unsatisfactory environmental effects. 9A area in the preferred alternative concept mitigation revealed that the people most affected had the smallest land mass, smallest incomes, highest minority and were the least likely to benefit from another road in their congested area. Blohm Park was used as a concept of mitigation, not mentioning other significant mitigation point requirements. Transit was not included in the study . The Clarksburg Master Plan required transit.

The supplement to the Environmental Impact Statement was required because there was substantial significance of adverse effects. The supplemental study had two with, and one without the M-83. Scenario 1 without the M-83 had similar efficiencies in improved capacity to one other alternative in the supplement, and was less environmentally damaging and practicable alternative. Scenario 1 has been pursued with transit on Md 355. A few intersections have been upgraded since 2017 when the Resolution was initiated for future master plans not to include the M83 in development of new/updated local master plans. Now the request to remove the 9A from the master plan of highways and transit ways is being discussed. The cost prohibitive nature of 9A and Transit prevents Scenario 2 & 3 of the Supplemental Study

In a report from the TAME Coalition there were 20+ options from a present or prior CIP within the area East of I-270! The two Eastern Road Arterials currently exist (MD 355 & MD 115) which run parallel to I270 to the East! There is no need for a third parallel road. Just south of the mid-county corridor study Md 200 and Route 124 could connect via Muncaster Mill, go past the Montgomery County Airport & relieve some clarksburg traffic. The new Stewardtown road extended could meet Middlebrook road with only one bridge. Both of these intersection improvements could be included. In the research for intersection improvements.: Bridge improvements should be considered. Three new bridges for 9A is not realistic when the area has at least five existing bridges that need upgrades. Better existing bridges are infrastructure improvements we can do to help drivers.

I believe the Scenario1 of the Supplemental report with careful intersection, bridge, and transit improvements will help the county as we improve capacity within our budget and constraints in the coming years. I am excited about the input from the school system to identify the most critical components of each area. We may even be able to get grant and federal assistance with this well conceived plan to move forward. Montgomery county department of transportations' work over the years does lead to removal of M-83 in favor of transit on 355 with intersection improvements throughout the eastern corridor, while keeping MD355 and MD 115 the eastern connectors.

From: alta.dabney@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Alta Miller](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Monday, November 18, 2024 10:32:50 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Alta Miller
7406 Spring Village Dr Springfield, VA 22150-4481
alta.dabney@gmail.com

From: lesliew@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Leslie Wharton](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 8:58:49 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

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As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Leslie Wharton
4978 Sentinel Dr Apt 501 Bethesda, MD 20816-3575
lesliew@eldersclimateaction.org

From: maxforrest@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Sarah Forrest](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 9:24:04 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

The reason that many of us choose to live in Montgomery County is woodlands, wetlands, and farmland, and if M-83 should be built, it will have a serious, negative change that will result in some of us moving from a county we've lived in, loved, and have contributed to for many years.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Sarah Forrest
19247 Dunbridge Way Montgomery Village, MD 20886-3961
maxforrest@comcast.net

From: sschlaikjer@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Stephen Schlaikjer](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 9:43:25 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Stephen Schlaikjer
11102 Sceptre Ridge Ter Germantown, MD 20876-6341
sschlaikjer@verizon.net

From: ayesha@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Ayesha Amsa](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 10:22:41 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Ayesha Amsa
8021 Georgia Ave Silver Spring, MD 20910-4967
ayesha@smartergrowth.net

From: dleggett@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Dan Leggett](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 10:29:43 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

I live near Comus and commute to Fulton, MD. I regularly travel on MD 355 from Comus Rd to Brink Road, on the full length of Brink Rd., on Snowden Farm Pkwy, and MD 27 during morning and evening rush hours. My observation is that traffic is not bad, and I really dislike slow traffic. Given that Clarksburg is mostly built out, it is hard to see a current or future need for completion of M-83.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Dan Leggett
24240 Peach Tree Rd Clarksburg, MD 20871-9112
dleggett@rcn.com

From: omarksky@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Mark Obrinsky](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 12:33:13 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

As you must know, outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands as it cuts through the Seneca Creek watershed. This is just not the right choice for our county. What we need to be doing is investing in more sustainable transportation options, rather than more roads, both to combat climate change and also to protect delicate ecosystems.

I personally use all kinds of transportation options. I walk, I ride my bike, I drive, I take buses and Metrorail. And what I'd love to see is better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in transit like MD-355 BRT; these will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Mark Obrinsky
4517 W Virginia Ave Bethesda, MD 20814-4611
omarksky@gmail.com

From: [Karthik Jianli](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Written comments to the planning board reg. M-83
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 2:14:35 PM

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

Hearing date: Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 6 p.m.

Item: **Public Hearing #3 regarding removal of unbuilt northern and southern extensions of Midcounty Highway Extended (M-83)**

Mailing address: **141 Limpkin Ave Clarksburg MD 20871**

My Comment:

"Clarksburg has experienced significant growth, expanding from a population of 10,000 in 2010 to over 40,000 today. This rapid growth has outpaced the development of essential infrastructure, particularly transportation. The removal of key sections of M-83 would further exacerbate these issues. The proposal will also jeopardize any potential future transit solutions, such as a Red Line extension or a proposed monorail linking Frederick, Clarksburg, Shady Grove, Bethesda, and Tysons Corner. If adopted, the proposed changes will severely compromise the quality of life for current and future residents of Clarksburg and UpCounty. Please implement the M-83 master plan without any changes."

Sincerely
Karthik Krishnan,
141 Limpkin Ave, Clarksburg, MD 20871
240-800-7081

From: jmiller2@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [James Miller](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 3:55:56 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
James Miller
507 Elm Ave Takoma Park, MD 20912-5433
jmiller2@umd.edu

From: ringebre@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Richard Ingebretsen](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2024 9:16:38 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Richard Ingebretsen
9205 Three Oaks Dr Silver Spring, MD 20901-3363
ringebre@gmail.com

From: cimino.andrea.m@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Andrea Cimino](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Thursday, November 21, 2024 9:44:07 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Andrea Cimino
3913 Hampden St Kensington, MD 20895-2006
cimino.andrea.m@gmail.com

From: scribes.02.decafs@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Charlotte Cook](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Thursday, November 21, 2024 9:44:14 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Charlotte Cook
10906 Bucknell Dr Silver Spring, MD 20902-4392
scribes.02.decafs@icloud.com

From: ericfowler24@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Eric Fowler](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Thursday, November 21, 2024 9:44:25 AM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Eric Fowler
17723 Meadow Vista Way Gaithersburg, MD 20877-1046
ericfowler24@gmail.com

From: shannonbshea@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Shannon Shea](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Friday, November 22, 2024 12:17:57 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Shannon Shea
70 Moore Dr Rockville, MD 20850-1230
shannonbshea@gmail.com

From: [Edgar Gonzalez](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Comment on the Master Plan of Highways - M83
Date: Friday, November 22, 2024 2:41:18 PM
Attachments: [M83 testimony 11 21 24.docx](#)

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

Chairman Harris:
Please enter the attached comments into the record.
Please share with the Commissioners and appropriate staff.
Thanks.
Edgar Gonzalez
Mobile:-240-832-8319

From: [Edgar Gonzalez](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Re: Automatic reply: Comment on the Master Plan of Highways - M83
Date: Friday, November 22, 2024 2:45:01 PM

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

I just sent testimony on M-83. Here is my full information:

Edgar Gonzalez

email address: EGonzalezSmta@gmail.com

Mobile phone number: 240-832-8319

Thanks.

E Gonzalez

On Fri, Nov 22, 2024 at 2:41 PM MCP-Chair <mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org> wrote:

Thank you for contacting the Planning Board Chair's Office. This confirms receipt of your message for distribution to appropriate staff to review. If you have submitted an inquiry, we will respond in a timely manner. You may also leave a voice message at (301) 495-4605 and a staff member will return your call.

If you have submitted written testimony for a Planning Board item, please be sure to include your mailing address to satisfy proper noticing requirements. If this was not already included, please reply to this email with that information. Written testimony submitted before the deadline of 12pm, two business days before the scheduled Planning Board meeting, will be distributed to the Board and staff and included in the public record. Written testimony received after the deadline will only be distributed to staff to review.

For more information about the Chair's Office, please visit:

<https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/>

M83 - SMTA TESTIMONY

My name is Edgar Gonzalez. I am one of the founders of the Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance (SMTA). This testimony is **in strong opposition** to the elimination of M83 from the Master Plan of Highways.

I am a Civil Engineer with more than 40 years of experience in Transportation Planning, Traffic Engineering and Public Policy working for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation as a Senior Transportation Planner, Chief Engineer and Deputy Director for Public Policy.

I have no personal economic interests in the area of the project, and nobody is paying me or SMTA to express our professional opinion on this matter.

During my 40-year career in the County I directly participated in more than 300 transportation projects, involving planning, engineering and construction. Only one of those projects received no opposition from adjacent property owners or from environmental advocacy groups. Opposition to projects is the norm in the County.

The development and approval of the Master Plans for Clarksburg, Germantown, Damascus and the Gaithersburg Vicinity involved many years of study; numerous community meetings; thousands of your professional staff hours were involved in the process. Millions of public dollars were spent in those efforts.

For about ten years, the County DOT conducted studies, including an Environmental Impact Statement for M83. Thousands of independent consultant hours, staff time in the County Executive Branch and your organization were spent on that effort. Eleven alternatives, including transit options were included in the analysis.

As a result of the process, impacts to parks, streams, noise sensitive areas and wetlands were reduced and mitigation measures developed.

The same arguments you are hearing now in support of deleting the project from the Master Plan, other Commissioners heard in the past. But, at that time, Commissioners also heard numerous comments in support of the project from those negatively impacted if the road was not built. They were residents along Brink Road, Wightman Road, Goshen Road Montgomery Village East and the elected officials from the City of Gaithersburg. Most are probably unaware of the current proposal. **We urge you to have direct outreach to them.**

Hundreds of people participated in the Mandatory Referral Public Hearing on the EIS in March 2013. After several hours of testimony and deliberation, the Modified Master Plan Alignment was approved -once again- by the Commissioners.

Before you make a final decision, please consider that:

1. M-83 is not just a road. It is a multi-modal facility that will provide accommodations to trucks and buses. It will provide the longest continuous sidewalk in the up county and will integrate bikeway facilities in the area by connecting the park bike trails in Clarksburg thus providing safe and continuous access from Clarksburg to the Shady Grove Metro Station.
2. Commission staff planned the M83 alignment. Commissioners and elected officials approved it. Those involved knew that the road would go through parks, cross streams and impact wetlands. But the EIS study showed that all impacts can be mitigated and wetland impacts were reduced to under one acre, from the initial 14 acres impacted by the original Master Plan alignment.
3. No elected official is proposing the construction of the road at this time, and it is very unlikely that the project will be implemented during this Commission's term. **However, elimination of the Master Plan alignment will result in elimination of protection of the existing 65% of the right of way already in public ownership and prevent you, and future Boards, from requiring additional dedication of the road's right of way as development occurs. These actions will deny the rights of future generations to make decisions on how to use that land.**
4. Thousands of residents and employers in Clarksburg and Upper Montgomery County have invested millions of dollars with the expectation and assumption that someday M83 would be built.
5. Today, Clarksburg has less than 30 percent of the homes and jobs envisioned in the Approved Master Plan. So, congestion, air quality emissions and traffic safety will deteriorate in the corridor, and adjacent areas, unless this transportation facility is built someday.
6. Clarksburg will continue to be that area of the County where your children, your children's children families and new immigrants will find opportunities to acquire homes at reasonable prices and with open spaces for recreational and after school activities for their kids.
7. Future Boards, elected officials, residents and regulatory agencies will continue to have large influence on **HOW AND WHEN** to proceed. **Today is not that day.**

Remember:

- a. The alignment must go thru parkland for which the Commission has ownership and authority over its use. Nothing can be implemented at a future time without the Commission's involvement and approval.
- b. The Commission and other State and Federal Regulatory Agencies will continue to have an approval role for the protection of streams and wetlands, existing development and protection of noise sensitive sites.
- c. Future Commissions will continue to have Mandatory Referral authority, thus conserving the ability to further reduce impacts.

There are two main reasons for the existence of the Planning Board as a reliable and credible institution:

- d. Expansion, protection and operation of Parks; and
- e. Planning for balanced and orderly growth of the County.

The Commission manages this orderly growth by the development of Master Plans, by monitoring and regulating growth thru the subdivision approval process and by mandatory referrals.

We urge you to keep faith with those who invested their economic resources in the purchase of their homes and provision of jobs relying on the future existence of this facility.

We urge you to resist today's calls to delete the project from the Master Plan of Highways and to preserve the rights of future generations. Previous commissioners have rejected those calls honoring the role your institution plays in the reliable and orderly planned growth of the County.

If necessary, we urge you to hire an independent consultant to conduct a detailed study of the consequences of eliminating the road, including a review of the previous and extensive MCDOT technical studies.

If you approve removal of this road alignment without a detailed and independent technical analysis, the fundamental faith in the validity of the planning process of this organization will be called into question, thus threatening the very reason for the existence of the Planning Board.

From: chrisvroome@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [christopher Vroome](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Saturday, November 23, 2024 1:30:47 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
christopher Vroome
7915 Eastern Ave Silver Spring, MD 20910-4896
chrisvroome@gmail.com

From: [Gail Landy](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Mid-County Highway Project
Date: Monday, November 25, 2024 12:40:41 PM

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

To whom it may concern,
I am providing written testimony opposing the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) for M83 highway
Hearing Date: November 14, 2024

Sincerely,
Gail Landy
17600 Silver Dollar CT
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

I support the no build option for the Mid-County Highway Extension project, another highway expansion plan which is counter to our goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled and the adjoined air, climate, and water pollution caused by storm runoff. The option to increase transit along Rt.355 was not considered as a viable alternative that adheres to the current goal of reducing the number of cars on highways and arterial roads. Congestion can be reduced without expanding highways. Extending and widening Mid-County Highway to a six lane expanse will evoke induced demand, the false conjecture that congestion will be reduced. In retrospect, transit such as Bus Rapid Transit could be employed on RT. 355, combined with an expanded MARC service, and increased funding for WMATA which can increase Metro's viability as a source of transportation. Express buses on I-270 can address traffic disparities and provide a connection to the Shady Grove Metro Station for transport to the inner suburbs and DC.

The six-lane highway which is planned for connecting Gaithersburg to Clarksburg will induce speeding, which poses danger to bicyclists and pedestrians even if provisions are provided. Pedestrians will likely be forced to walk long distances for safe crossing in once connected neighborhoods, even when needed infrastructure exists.

M83 will divide neighborhoods, a predicament reminiscent of the 60's interstate project which broke up and divided thriving communities. It will make it difficult and dangerous for children walking and bicycling to school as the highway high speed traffic races pass them, often unaware of their presence. Neighborhoods in Montgomery Village will suffer the consequences of the highway, upending local parks and green spaces that are the pride of Montgomery County living.

M83 will override and destroy Whetstone Run, the closest publicly accessible park for observing and communing with nature for thousands of people which runs amuck the proposed highway. Wetlands that filter and cleanse water and remove sediment will be

overrun and eliminated. These natural places provide habitat for birds and other wildlife. The Mid-Highway Extension will predicate urban sprawl as development overrides the once uninhabited, natural landscape. It overrides the goal of placing multiplex, dense development in established suburban neighborhoods. Rather than deeming Clarksburg an outlying suburb that can only be traversed with a car, Ride-On buses which are prevalent and popular for transport in lower Montgomery County can be implemented in Clarksburg which will eliminate the need for a car for many life endeavors and reduce suburban congestion.

M83 will upend our climate goals, for which transportation is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. The highway also overrides land-use goals of not encumbering our streams, wetlands, and natural forests, but instead developing new housing in already established neighborhoods and business districts, in other words building densely. Expanding highways defeats the directive of the 21st Century, which is instituting reliable and affordable transit and overlaying the use of a the car for intercity and longer distance travel. This will facilitate the fight against catastrophic climate change. Transit is not only safer, with cars being much more prone to collisions but a cheaper form of transportation that permits indulging in transformative reading on your trip to the office. Expanding highways and connective routes are not required, only debasing the landscape, increasing vehicle miles traveled and congestion over the short run.

From: [Carolyn Wright](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: M-83
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 1:06:11 PM

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

Artie Harris,

Can you please do whatever it takes to remove M83 highway from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways?

This highway would cut our peaceful neighborhood in half, bisect a number of parks, forestlands, and a trail that is used by many. Any given day/night we have multiple deer in our yard, fox, owls, squirrels and bunnies. A 4-6 lane highway would not only disrupt the wildlife, the woods, our neighborhood and others, it would go directly behind quite a few houses. The noise and pollution would be problematic. We would no longer be able to let our children ride bikes and scooters in the neighborhood.

Increase the number of buses that would take people from MD 355 to Clarksburg. That seems to be a less costly solution.

Thank you for listening to our concerns,

Carolyn and John Wright
6 Longworth Ct
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Lisa Acuna](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: REMOVE M83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 1:22:55 PM

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

c/o Artie Harris

Good Afternoon and Happy Holiday Season,

I would like to share that we live 10708 Game Preserve Road, Gaithersburg MD 20879 and have for the last 23 years. We purchased this home as we wanted our son to have a connection with nature and this home allowed for him to be in the backyard and woods for hours on end. This home and the quiet surroundings have been the most wonderful place to live and raise our child.

I could not imagine walking up to the sound of traffic in my backyard versus the AMAZING wildlife we enjoy daily.

PLEASE do not allow the M83 to stay on the books, it needs to be removed as it would be disastrous to our community- the wildlife and property values.

Thank you for your consideration and I wish you a warm and wonderful holiday season.

Lisa Acuna
301-437-6110

From: [Barbara Natoli](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: M-83 - remove this plan
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 2:00:52 PM

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

Please remove the M83 plan from construction. If constructed, it will divide our peaceful neighborhood (Seneca Whetstone) in half and go right behind a number of homes, including our home.

Additionally, we love this neighborhood because of the beautiful wildlife and it's peaceful nature. Construction of M83 will affect the multitude of owl, deer, fox, squirrels and bunnies in the neighborhood. It would bisect a number of parks, woods and the Seneca Greenway Trail.

It will also increase the noise and add pollution to our beautiful neighborhood. It would make living in this neighborhood awful. Right now, we enjoy walking and riding bikes in our neighborhood. Construction of M83 would curtail our children's bike riding and skateboarding.

A 4-6 lane highway would be devastating to our neighborhood and surrounding area. Adding more buses on 355 into Clarksburg would be a less costly solution.

Please remove the construction of M83,
Barbara & James Natoli
5 Longworth Ct
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

From: ottergirlkelley@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Faith Kelley](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 2:19:30 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

If built, the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83) would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Faith Kelley
5454 Ruth Ave Oakland, CA 94601-5526
ottergirlkelley@gmail.com

From: [Mariken Deist](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Removal of Proposed M83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 5:29:43 PM

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

Dear Mr Harris,

I am appealing for the removal of the proposed M83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways. This proposal would have significant negative impacts on our peaceful neighborhood, and I felt it was important to voice my concerns.

The project would:

- Divide our community in half and run directly behind several homes.
- Severely affect the natural habitat of local wildlife.
- Bisect parks, woods, and the cherished Seneca Greenway Trail.
- Introduce substantial noise and pollution, undermining the quiet charm of our neighborhood.
- Curtail children's activities like bike riding and skateboarding due to safety concerns.

A highway of this scale would be devastating to our neighborhood and the surrounding area. Additionally, I suggest that expanding bus services along 355 into Clarksburg would be a far more cost-effective and less disruptive alternative.

Mariken Deist
10804 Eberhardt Dr
Gaithersburg, MD 20879
240 997-9493

From: [Mark & Jennie Brzezinski](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Removal of M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 5:54:39 PM

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

Regarding: MPOHT public hearing on November 14, 2024 on the potential removal of Midcounty Highway Extended (M-83) from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways

Dear Chair Harris and members of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

This is not another copied and pasted form letter from residents who want a shortcut route saving very little time regardless of the environmental impact, but an impassioned, heartfelt plea from a homeowner whose neighborhood would be destroyed. M-83 cuts the Seneca Whetstone subdivision in half and would be devastating to the quality of life in the neighborhood. The road would be constructed on a very narrow strip of land that abuts the back lot line of several homes. Many children in the area have friends that would live on the opposite side of M-83, creating an unsafe crossing to visit what previously would have been close neighbors. Seneca Whetstone is also home to many groups of walkers that regularly navigate all the streets of the subdivision and a highway through the center of it would ruin that experience. Anyone that is in favor of keeping M-83 in the master plan should come visit the Seneca Whetstone subdivision and witness the absurdity of a highway cutting through the middle of a beautiful 40-year-old neighborhood.

The county has a determined dedication to save the environment, proof of which the law against the use of herbicides on our lawns. The county has long believed it is important to save our Agriculture Reserve, another nod to preserving our land from aggressive development. M-83 not only crosses Seneca Creek, it also runs in Great Seneca Stream Valley Park for several tenths of a mile. In this portion of the park is a 2.9 mile section of The Seneca Greenway Trail which runs from 355 to Damascus. The roadway would destroy several sections of a trail used by many county residents. Before deciding to keep M-83 in the master plan, I recommend anyone in favor of it take a walk on The Seneca Greenway Trail and observe the destruction of natural resources it would bring if ever built. Its inclusion in the master plan is in direct opposition to the desire of the county government's commitment to be better environmental stewards.

People are tired of inaction from our elected and appointed officials and now is the time to act. To this day, no one has found a good enough reason to build M-83, just the opposite. By not including it in regional transportation planning in Visualize 2045 or Visualize 2050, the county has made its intentions obvious. If there was any desire by the county to build M-83, it would have been built by now. The message is clear – while this connection may have made sense at the time of its inclusion of the master plan, other more viable options have surfaced that make the continued presence of this roadway in the master plan illogical.

I understand the desire for an upcounty traffic solution and one is indeed necessary, but this is not it. If this right of way did not exist and we were attempting to create a transit solution right now, M-83 would not be considered an acceptable solution as better ones exist. Leaving this relic from a past era of planning handcuffs us from developing other viable solutions that make sense for the present and future of transportation in the region.

Mark Brzezinski
10725 Game Preserve Rd
Gaithersburg, MD

From: [Petra](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: M-83
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 6:51:54 PM

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

cc Artie Harris

To Whom It May Concern

Hi - we moved to Eberhardt Drive just about four months ago; the natural beauty and peaceful surroundings were major attractions to us; the proximity of wildlife is so rare and wonderful and the plans surrounding M-83 sound like a horrid nightmare. The destruction of natural habitats must go against the principles of Montgomery County policies and beliefs, simply to apparently serve the needs of the Clarksburg community. The noise, pollution and utter destruction would cut this peaceful neighborhood into shreds; not to mention the monies needed to compensate homeowners for their losses of home, property values and peace of mind. A huge multilane highway is certainly not the answer to serve more and more bedroom communities in the ever expanding beltway, not only ruining natural habitats but also historically important sites. There are better and more efficient ways to deal with an onslaught of traffic- in addition to improving safe and accessible public transport in a climate friendly manner, for example active electronic traffic flow management on I 270 and improvements on Frederick Road. Those are the designated high-traffic thruways; lets keep it that way.

Sincerely,

Thomas J and Petra J Rabil
10824 Eberhardt Drive Gatithersburg MD 20879
Sent from my iPhone

From: dknevets@verizon.net
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Remove M83 highway from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (Attn Artie Harris)
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 9:09:14 PM

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

Hello, this is my official request to ban the M83 highway. It would split an established community in half and take away homes from the numerous wildlife. The noise and air pollution will affect all of the people who live in Seneca Whetstone. Property values would plummet.

There has to be other ways to improve the traffic flow then tearing right through a lovely neighborhood.

Please remember the impact on homeowners and animals when making your decision. If you would want this in your backyard, then vote in favor of the M83, I'm pretty sure no one would want that, so why punish us? Vote to remove the M83 from the Master Plan.

Thank you for listening.

Diane K Stevens
1 Longworth Court
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

From: [Alex Acuna](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: REMOVE M83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 11:50:06 PM

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

Good evening,

I am writing today to request the removal of the M83 project from the master plan of highways and transitways. I have lived at 10708 Game Preserve Rd since 2001 where I have grown up from the ripe age of 4. I grew up here, had a wonderful childhood, and an overall amazing experience in our small little neighborhood mainly due to the woods, and quiet surroundings of our community. Continuing the M83 project would ruin the peace and tranquility of the community as well as ruin the atmosphere of the neighborhood the families and children live in.

Day by day I see children playing in the streets, and the woods, families walking their pets, and taking a stroll with their newborns. The quiet and beautiful nature of our community should not have to be adjusted due to a highway project that has not been needed and would still not help the community at this time. Removing this project from the books would give everyone peace of mind and overall have a prosperous effect on everyone in the community.

The connection in our area with nature from plants to animals is truly incredible, we see everything from deer, raccoons, and opossums, to groundhogs, rabbits, and foxes. The symbiosis our community has with the state park and the M83 section of the woods behind our homes is truly all one big ecosystem. Removing this plan from the projects would save the peace we enjoy with nature in and around our homes; along with saving the lives of all of the animals connecting us together.

Please strongly consider removing the M83 project from the master plan of highways and transitways. It would mean the world to not only me but also the community and everything inside of it.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving,
Alex Acuna
240-543-7179

From: [Stewart Schwartz](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Aldrich, Sofia](#); [Carrie Kisicki](#)
Subject: MPOH -- Comment letter recommending removal of M-83
Date: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 12:46:53 PM
Attachments: [2024.11.27 CSG Comment Letter on M83 - Final.pdf](#)

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

We have attached our comments recommending removal of M-83 from the MPOH. Thank you for your important work.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Stewart

Stewart Schwartz | Executive Director

Coalition for Smarter Growth

PO Box 73282

Washington, DC 20056

www.smartergrowth.net | [@betterDCregion](#)

stewart@smartergrowth.net | [@csgstewart](#)

(703) 599-6437 (cell)

Your gift helps keep CSG's advocacy going! [Donate today!](#)

Check out our Blueprint for a Better Region video!

<https://smartergrowth.net/blueprint/>

Check out our [2022 ULI Changemaker Award](#)

November 27, 2024

Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reedie Dr, 14th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: Item 7 — Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) – 2024 Technical Update

Dear Chair Harris and members of the Planning Board:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG). CSG is the leading organization in the D.C. metro region advocating for walkable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for our region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We thank the Planning Board and Planning staff for taking note of the volume of public feedback on M-83, and scheduling additional hearings to consider M-83's removal from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

M-83 is not the right way forward to provide better transportation options Upcounty. It is an outdated plan from a different era of planning and engineering, and it is fundamentally out of step not only with what we know today about the vital connections between environmental and human health—but also with what we know today about best practices to address transportation needs. Fortunately, the county is well on its way to implementing a much more effective mix of bus rapid transit and local street safety improvements that, per the County's 2017 supplemental report, will reduce vehicle miles traveled, increase transit ridership, and reduce rush hour delays on I-270.

M83 is based on obsolete travel and land use assumptions

SHA traffic data shows that traffic volumes on most of the major north-south roads in the MD 83 corridor have declined and did so even before the pandemic. SHA had forecast 34-48% growth in traffic volumes on MD 355 by 2030, but traffic volumes on 355 peaked in 2014 and 2017. Other roads -- MD 27, MD 124, MD 108, Clarksburg Rd/Stumptown Rd, Snowden Farm Parkway -- haven't seen increases in traffic volumes according to SHA data. Since the pandemic the vast increase in telecommuting and the huge vacancies in office park buildings is likely contributing to further declines in peak hour driving.

M83 would generate higher volumes of traffic in the Upcounty – while failing to provide alternatives

Two things can be true at the same time – declining driving demand today because of telecommuting and possibly online shopping, but also induced driving generated by the presence of a new highway. What we now know from study after study—including examples in

our own region—is that the temporary relief from traffic seemingly offered by new road capacity is eaten up within years as more people decide to take more car trips because it has become more convenient to drive. Expanded highways also drive development to more auto-dependent areas, further increasing traffic volumes.

This is a phenomenon called *induced demand*, and it eventually leads you right back to the traffic problem you started with—but with even more driving overall. See [CSG's summary of the research here](#). We saw after the state of Maryland spent \$200 million to expand I-270 from 8 to 12 lanes, traffic gridlock returned in just 8 years (featured in a 1999 Washington Post article and confirmed by a Transportation Planning Board analysis).

M83 would cause significant environmental damage – to the watershed, stream valleys, and the climate

M-83 would not result in long-term, sustainable improvements to travel times and traffic congestion. It is, however, *highly* likely that building M-83 would result in increased carbon emissions from increased vehicle miles traveled, as the county's own modeling predicts. And it is a certainty that M-83 would cause damage to the sensitive ecosystems it cuts through, including watersheds that feed into our regional drinking water supply.

As with the now well-documented phenomenon of induced demand, the connections between human and environmental health were perhaps not fully appreciated by decisionmakers at the time M-83 was originally planned. Now, we know better, and we need to act accordingly.

Our region is just exiting its longest-ever recorded period with no precipitation. We cannot take the health of the ecosystems that feed into our drinking water supply for granted. Likewise, we now know that the many byproducts of traveling by car, from auto emissions to microplastic particles produced by our tires, do not have a neutral impact on our health or on our environment. Rather, they cause negative health impacts like increased rates of asthma for those living near roadways, and contribute to the already-disastrous and mounting effects of climate change.

MD-355 Bus Rapid Transit is a better alternative for more Upcounty transportation options – and already underway

There is a path forward to relieving transportation challenges in the Upcounty without generating long-term negative environmental and health effects. The solution to Upcounty transportation challenges lies in high-quality, high-capacity new transit connections, safer and more comfortable options to get around by walking and biking, and targeted intersection and street grid improvements to improve accessibility. These solutions provide a sustainable long-term framework for relieving traffic by offering more and better choices for how people get around.

Planning Board progress on these transportation alternatives is well underway. Bus rapid transit, or BRT, on MD-355 will provide a high-capacity, high-frequency bus line with service between Bethesda and Clarksburg. The County Department of Transportation is planning to begin construction on the central segment of MD-355 bus rapid transit next year—the first of three segments—and is seeking to contract a progressive design-build firm not just for this segment but to eventually build all segments of MD-355 BRT. This reflects our county's commitment to reduce delays and quickly and efficiently deliver long-promised BRT on this corridor.

The County's own [2017 supplemental report](#) on M-83 found that when it excluded the proposed M-83 highway from its analysis, and focused instead on bus rapid transit on Route 355, along with improvements to existing intersections and roads, BRT-based scenarios excelled in reducing driving, producing the lowest number of vehicle miles traveled in private vehicles, highest percentage of people traveling by transit and shortest rush hour travel times on Route 355, among other key metrics.

CSG has been and will continue to be a strong advocate not only for this BRT project, but more broadly for better bus service, transit-oriented development, safe streets for all users, and in particular, safer and more comfortable options for walking and biking Upcounty.

We urge the Planning Board to move decisively forward in this direction, and no longer keep alive in our county's plans an unbuilt and environmentally damaging highway proposal that distracts from better transportation options already underway. The time is now to remove M-83 from our county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carrie Kisicki".

Carrie Kisicki

Montgomery County Advocacy Manager

From: [Maureen Fisher](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Mid County Highway Extension M-83
Date: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 1:40:53 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Members,

I am writing in regard to Mid County extension, also known as M-83. I would like to specifically address the southern portion of the extension, which is planned for the right of way from Shady Grove Road to the north side of Redland Road. This would follow a path that would narrowly fit between two very popular parks and claim land that is currently one of only a few green spaces left for wildlife in the area. In addition, this portion of the extension would add just one more high speed, high traffic road with unacceptable proximity for the residents of the area. This disregard for wildlife, environment and safety of the residents needs to be addressed in order to weigh the importance of the southern section of the M-83 extension.

Derwood neighborhoods are already enveloped by traffic and noise from Shady Grove Road, Mid County Highway, and the Intercounty Connector. To add another road through this area would complete a full circle of traffic around these neighborhoods. Since the initiation of the Master Plan, Derwood has had a tremendous amount of wildlife habitat depleted and environmental disruption due to the development of roads and the Shady Grove Metro station. In addition these roads have brought a continuous increase in traffic and noise. More recently, the absurd noise levels of modified exhausts and the dangerously high speeds at which some drivers of both cars and motorcycles travel on the ICC and Shady Grove Road has become a noticeable issue that would only worsen with the addition of the southern extension. As you can imagine, all of these factors have considerably degraded the quality of life for Derwood residents.

It is clear that the northern section of the M-83 has been waiting for more roadways since the inception of the Master Plan and there is a need for some type of solution. It is also clear that the southern portion lies in an area that has already been impacted by the Master Plan in order to inject roads that allow direct access to the Metro station and the ICC. Therefore, the southern extension of the ICC is not necessary. A separation of the northern and the southern extensions of M-83 would allow the northern extension to pursue their need for more roads and enable the southern extension to be taken off the Master Plan.

In addition, steps toward an accelerated plan for a northern extension of the Metro Red Line should be considered as part of a possible solution for residents in the northern extension area and help to alleviate the the ever increasing traffic on the current roads that all lead to one location - Derwood.

Regards,
Maureen Fisher
Derwood Resident

From: [Karen Hench](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Remove M83 from MC Master Plan of Highways & Transitways
Date: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 3:33:11 PM

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

Mr. Artie Harris and other MC Master Plan decisionmakers:

Please add my name to the 100s of Montgomery County (MC) residents requesting removal of M83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways as well as the current and all future Montgomery County fiscal budgets.

I do not support moving forward with M83 because:

1. M83 is not needed by residents and commuters. Current roadways adequately serve those drivers;
2. County tax dollars are better spent on health, safety, and welfare needs of the underserved and families who cannot earn a living wage;
3. Wildlife kills by motorists are rising exponentially because animals' living space is being destroyed to build roads and housing.
4. The Seneca Whetstone community is a small, harmonious, and caring neighborhood. Building M83 would dissect the neighborhood, decrease everyone's quality of life, and simply destroy a solid, valuable MC asset.

Please contact me to discuss this further. I am a current Seneca Whetstone HomeOwners' Association Board Member.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

VR/
CAPT Karen Hench (ret.)
10825 Game Preserve RD
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

mobile: 240-687-1900

Please keep my contact information confidential.

From: [Paul Majewski](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Keep M-83 – Midcounty Highway in the MHOPT
Date: Friday, November 29, 2024 1:08:10 PM

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

Paul Majewski
12233 Piedmont RD
Clarksburg, MD 20871

Dear Chair and Members of the Montgomery County MD Planning Board -
In regard to the Second hearing on Nov. 14, 2024, and the upcoming 6PM Jan. 9, 2025 Third hearing on the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024 Technical Update:
M-83 - Keep it in the plans.

I believe traffic congestion currently justifies the completion of M-83 as has been planned and accepted by MCDOT's Draft Environmental Effects Report.

Addressing the **finality** of removing it **entirely** from the MPOHT: If an argument is made that future BRT or any future transit or other future factors will alleviate the future traffic congestion, then also consider the argument that those alternate transportations or factors might not be sufficient. Indeed, **near or long-term future factors might make the need for the M-83 completion all the more desirable. Who knows for sure exactly what the future transportation trends, vehicles, economics, or politics bring.** I'm no futurist but we all know: **removing the planned completion of M-83 is a drastic action that greatly diminishes mobility for that whole region, probably forever.**

What a catastrophe it would be if the R.O.W. for M-83 were taken away in 2025, only to learn in that year or later that we need that R.O.W. for M-83. What a shame if property along or in that path are developed and roads constructed in a less desirable manner than they would if M-83 were built or planned to be built.

I enjoy nature. I side with environmentalists on many things, but not on this instance.

No endangered species will be threatened by M-83 completion. If so, the citizen environmentalists who have studied that R.O.W. well would have found such a species. I thank them for that and for any of their input to the designers of the future M-83 completion. I'm aware that animal underpasses and barriers could lessen deer road kill.

I also thank any of the homeowners near the county owned R.O.W. who will lose any of the tranquility they have had due to the delay of M-83 being completed. **But I join with all homeowners in the joy the completion of M-83 will bring because of the mobility, convenience, and safety that comes with its use. Many residents of Montgomery Village have wanted and voted for M-83 completion.** Many residents east of Clarksburg toward Derwood will enjoy the trip along M-83 to enjoy the carousel and recreation at Ovid Hazen, or to walk in the neighborhoods, trails, and parks in and around Clarksburg.

As a Clarksburg resident since 1989, I argued for less development but worked with the plans and accepted the well planned developments. Although farming areas and trees were lost, and some rural or country roads should no longer be walked along -- I now enjoy walking through the new residential developments, along Clarksburg's well built section of M-83, and the area's well planned trails.

Reminders:

- The County Council and Executive positions are term limited. **Will future officials want mobility and not have a R.O.W. to build that mobility?**

- The 2017 Midcounty Corridor Study states that:
 - - **concurrence from the EPA, US Army Corp of Engineers, and the MDE was received** in two project milestones: Purpose and Need (P&N), and Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS); and,
 - - the benefits of the M-83 and BRT projects are cumulative. [In my words: **BRT as planned will not replace the need or usefulness for M-83.**]

Sincerely,

Paul Majewski (pmajewski123@comcast.net 301-972-6031)
12233 Piedmont RD
Clarksburg, MD 20871

From: mfolling@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of [Marianne Follingstad](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Friday, November 29, 2024 5:59:45 PM

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

Dear Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I am writing to ask you to remove M-83 from the county's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

I find it difficult to believe you would even consider building the outdated Mid-County Highway Extended (M-83), which would destroy farmland, forests and wetlands in its path through the Seneca Creek watershed. M-83 is the wrong choice for our county at a time when we need to be investing in sustainable transportation—not more roads—to combat climate change and protect delicate ecosystems.

Better street connections, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and investments in great transit like MD-355 BRT will help provide much needed transportation improvements upcounty without the devastating environmental harms of building M-83.

As long as M-83 remains in the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, it is at risk of being built by a future county administration, and is a distraction from moving forward decisively with forward-thinking investments in sustainable transit to address transportation needs upcounty.

It is time to remove this destructive and unnecessary proposed highway from the county's official master plans.

Sincerely,
Marianne Follingstad
1622 Gruenther Ave Rockville, MD 20851-1446
mfolling@verizon.net

From: [Ann Smith](#)
To: [Aldrich, Sofia](#); [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: After public input
Date: Saturday, November 30, 2024 7:13:16 PM

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

Is a comprehensive environmental impact statement initiated now since clearly the area surrounding a new road has multiple issues and those outside the road area have separate issues.
Sent from my iPhone

Nov. 24, 2024

Dear Chairman,

Please remove M83 highway from The Master Plan of Highways and Transitways. It will pave over streams and parks, and harm forests. It will destroy lands which are wildlife habitats. It would replace a park I love to visit with a 4-6 lane highway. It would harm resources such as The Seneca Creek Greenway Trail. It would add more pollution. There are smarter, less harmful alternatives, such as enhancing current roads or using alternative form of transportation. Please do not destroy my community.

Sincerely,

Aloha Haker
930 Windbrooke Dr.
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

From: [Edgar Gonzalez](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Councilmember Marilyn Balcombe](#)
Subject: Amendment to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Wednesday, December 11, 2024 1:51:55 PM

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

Commissioners:

I write in opposition to deleting the southern end of M83 from the Master Plan of Highways.

Construction of road projects in Montgomery County has always encountered opposition from adjacent property owners, environmental advocacy groups or regulatory agencies.

The InterCounty Connector (ICC or MD 200) has been perhaps the most controversial transportation project in the last 50 years in the County. Despite the general alignment being included in the **1964 General Plan (“On Wedges and Corridors”)**, it took the State several starts and stops of Environmental Planning efforts until a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was approved for the road in January 2006. The Draft EIS for the ICC documented the impacts of the **original planned alignment by the Montgomery Planning Board**: 22 acres of wetlands, 145 acres of parklands, 77 stream crossings and negative effects to 27 species of birds.

The right of way for this 18-mile road, however, had been protected by the Planning Board through the subdivision review process in accordance with Approved Master Plans and through the **Advanced Land Acquisition** process by the County and State.

The Winters Run subdivision, on the west side of Md 115 at Olde Mill Run, was approved by the Planning Board in 1972, several years after the General Plan approval of the ICC alignment. The western end of the subdivision was immediately adjacent to Rock Creek Park and the right of way for the ICC.

During the federal EIS process the original alignment of the road though Rock Creek Park was modified at the insistence of the MNCPPC. MNCPPC owned the land, had administrative powers over it and the Commission was a Cooperating Agency with the State in the development of the EIS. One of the main reasons given for the shift in the alignment was to

facilitate and reduce future impacts for the connection on the southern end of Mid County Highway (M-83) from Shady Grove Road to the ICC.

The shift in the alignment ran through the middle of the already built Winters Run subdivision resulting in the taking of several residences and disruption of the cohesion of the existing neighborhood, at a cost of several million dollars of taxpayers money. Despite the taking of the homes and the disruption to the neighborhood, the federal regulatory agencies and the State agreed to the shift in alignment requested by MNCPPC. The “apparent tunnel” of the ICC south of Shady Grove Road is the result of those takes.

There was public support at the November 14, 2024 Public Hearing for maintaining the southern alignment of M83 in the Master Plan of Highways. I am not aware of any opposition to the future 0.7 mile extension of M-83 to the ICC. All the needed right of way is already reserved; no wetlands or streams are affected; no homes or businesses would be taken, and previous actions by the Planning Board envisioned that connection. In fact, the future extension of M83 was used by the Commission as a reason for the taking of existing homes and disruption to a built subdivision. It would be inconceivable if the Commission recommends its deletion from the Master Plan.

For all of the above, I urge you to maintain the extension of M-83 from Shady Grove Road to the ICC (MD 200) in the Master Plan of Highways.

Edgar Gonzalez,

Former Deputy Director MCDOT.

Email: EGonzalezSmta@gmail.com

From: [Kira Lueders](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Councilmember Stewart's Office; councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov](#)
Subject: Public Hearing on Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Date: Monday, December 30, 2024 11:30:13 AM

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

As president of the Parkwood Residents Association, I receive notices about the Planning Board's Public Hearings to share with members of my neighborhood. Recently, I received such a notice about the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways -24 Technical Update Public Hearing #3. The plan is described as "a comprehensive summary of all significant existing and planned highway and transitway infrastructure in Montgomery County". Were there hearings #1 and #2 that residents were not notified about, and that were held in other locations? This hearing is scheduled for January 9, 2025 at 6 pm at the Upcounty Regional Services Center in Germantown. Attendance by down-county residents such as those in my neighborhood who may want to testify in-person will require driving in peak time traffic, and elderly residents may find driving at night a challenge. This issue seems too important to have only one hearing, and to not have remote access for those who are unable to attend in person.

Excuse me for being cynical about this, but the way this hearing is scheduled seems the ultimate in discouraging citizen participation.

Kira Lueders

From: [Rajendra Uppoor](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: rupper@aol.com
Subject: Petition to REMOVE the unbuilt southern extension between MD 200 and Shady Grove Road from Master Plan.
Date: Monday, December 30, 2024 1:36:25 PM

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are sending you this petition to REMOVE the unbuilt sections of Midcounty Highway Extended, specifically the southern extension between MD 200 and Shady Grove Road, from the Master Plan of M-83-Midcounty Highway. Our home parcel lot is located directly on the northern edge of Southern Extension between MD 200 and Shade Grove Road, our home address 6 Beauvoir Court, Derwood, MD 20855-1250, SDAT District 09, MAP GT41, Parcel 0000, Subdivision 004, Section/Block B, Lot 24 at Mill Creek Towne, Montgomery County Real Property Account # 02096372.

If the UNBUILT southern extension is built between Shade Grove Road and MD 200, such road will pass directly behind our home, leading to excessive vehicular traffic and traffic noise which we do not wish to live with. The unbuilt road may also adversely affect the existing Redland Park and its current/existing recreational facilities such as the Tennis Courts and walking trails popularly used by several neighborhood residents every day. Based on these rationale, we request you and the MNCPPC-MC Commission to REMOVE the unbuilt section of Midcounty Highway Extension between MD 200 and Shady Grove Road, from the Master Plan.

Sincerely,
Rajendra Uppoor, and
Ramana Sista Uppoor,
Principle Residents of 6 Beauvoir Court, Derwood, MD 20855 since July 23, 1999.
Our home property is Homestead Approved from July 1999 also.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Ann Smith](#)
To: [MCP-Chair; Aldrich, Sofia](#)
Subject: Old testimony from 2013 about removing M83
Date: Tuesday, December 31, 2024 8:19:17 PM
Attachments: [Ann Smith - testimony, M-NCPPC.docx](#)

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

This is an old testimony, fyi
Still relevant, but before the chosen alternative or supplemental study.
Ann Smith
PS. I am no longer on the board for SCWP

Sent from my iPhone

M-83 Public Hearing for M-NCPPEC-Nov.21, 2013

Dear Chairwoman Carrier and Commissioners:

I want to promote intergenerational ecologic and economic planning that work together. That is why I am supporting TAME Coalition. They don't want to push the damage that would be caused by the proposed M-83 highway onto anyone else, whether it be our children or our neighbors downstream.

I feel that our county's infrastructure is in jeopardy. We do not have to keep this highway plan that will cost well over \$350 million. We do need money that should continue improving infrastructure. Right now the average daily consumption for the WSSC is 70 gallons of water per person daily. If the current county population grows as predicted by 2025 Montgomery County will need 160 million gallons every day! We will not be able to provide for that population without excellent planning.

What impacts our water quality is impervious surface runoff. My home and work is located near Great Seneca Creek. Scientists, like myself, have solid evidence that the amount of water runoff into any creek is proportional to the amount of pavement in that area. Increased pavement runoff translates into flooding risks and water quality risks. The index of biological integrity (IBI) is a measure of stream health, and that health is determined by the amount of water that absorbs into the ground. Tree roots absorb water, and the trees also act as sound and pollution buffers between neighborhoods. A stream requires a large buffer. If the proposed M83 highway is not developed, the current buffer will remain unpaved. We will be able to keep the index of biological integrity at the level it is now (See Pie Graph attached).

As one of nine watershed groups in Montgomery County, Seneca Creek Watershed Partners, of which I am president, is diligently working with private landowners to promote rain gardens and rain barrel programs. These programs are all being developed by Montgomery County DEP to slow runoff. We are trying to support the county by educating the public about reducing impervious surface area and runoff, and only ask that you model this by not adding impervious surfaces to the parklands. While each individual we reach can take small steps toward reducing runoff, you, the Planning Board, can have a major impact in an area that affects many individuals by not granting right-of-way for M-83 through the parkland. Seneca Creek Watershed Partners

would like to wholeheartedly promote the county as an example to its residents of sustainable water management practices, so that we can feel we are all working together.

I have looked at a lot of agendas that the Montgomery County Planning Board has worked on, and I have attended several recent public hearings. I notice that a lot of decisions on development are somewhat small scale. I also see a lot of zoning codes being altered. You have a lot of control over the pace and patterns of development, and I urge you to implement big changes to our infrastructure that will truly improve the quality of life for generations to come. Water is a vital component of quality of life, and nothing will be gained by making infrastructure changes that lower its quality. It is true that the people in Clarksburg need a town center desperately. They are already in direct line with the existing stores at Neelsville Shopping Center in Germantown, but need a super-fast transit system to get there. Gaithersburg has Lake Forest shopping mall that is not well utilized; many apartment dwellers and homeowners already use public transit to get there. Perhaps we could provide better access to these areas that are already paved!

I hope today you will see that the TAME Coalition is one group trying to lead the county in a good direction. Please consider their smart growth proposals. There are a lot of lives at stake when the future is not considered properly. Ecologic and economic planning need to work together. What was acceptable for development in the 60's, is not acceptable for this generation in 2013.

Ann Smith, President

Seneca Creek Watershed Partners

From: [DAN kulpinski](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Comments re: Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024 Technical Update
Date: Wednesday, January 1, 2025 6:24:56 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Chair Artie Harris and Planning Board Members,

I am submitting these comments for Public Hearing #3 for the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024 Technical Update, scheduled for January 9, 2025.

I urge you to recommend that the County Council remove the unbuilt northern and southern extensions of Midcounty Highway (M-83) from the master plan. I live behind Mill Creek Towne Local Park and about 1.5 blocks from where the planned southern extension to M-83 would go. The extension would link M-83 to the Intercounty Connector (ICC), but this link is unnecessary, because vehicles can get on the ICC just a short way up Shady Grove Road.

In addition, the extension would require the removal of wooded areas in or adjacent to Mill Creek Towne and Redland Local Parks. In this age of climate change, we should preserve as many wooded and forested areas as possible – to soak up carbon dioxide and storm water, and lower air temperatures – not cut them down for an unnecessary road extension. In fact, we should plant more trees.

The extension would come very close to homes on Beauvoir Boulevard; instead of seeing trees out their front windows, those homeowners would see Midcounty Highway, thus reducing their quality of life and most likely their property values.

The extension would also come close to homes on Founders Mill Drive, Sugar Maple Court, Flatwood Drive, Beauvoir Court, Universal Court, and Vega Court. The disruption of these neighborhoods, and mine, by the planned road is totally unnecessary.

The unbuilt northern extension of Midcounty Highway should also be removed from the master plan, because it would traverse the Great Seneca Stream Valley Park and the North Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park, requiring the removal of many trees in these forested areas.

In addition, the northern extension would parallel Md. Route 355 and Interstate 270. We do not need a third high-speed, north-south road so close to the others. To move people from places such as Clarksburg and Germantown to points south, I support transit, such as bus rapid transit on Md. 355 and the extension of Metro's Red Line.

In closing, I urge you to recommend removing the extensions from the master plan. We should take steps to protect the environment and already built-out neighborhoods,

and transition to a future that relies more on alternative modes of transportation and reducing transportation demand.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Dan Kulpinski
7312 Blanchard Dr.
Derwood, Md. 20855

From: [Bossi, Andrew](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Cc: [Aldrich, Sofia](#); [Peckett, Haley](#); [Pitts, Corey](#); [Iseli, Claire](#); [Wellington, Meredith](#); [Tibbitts, Dale](#); [Olsen Salazar, Kara](#)
Subject: Master Plan of Hwys & Transitways - Additional MCDOT Testimony
Date: Friday, January 3, 2025 1:57:30 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[Memorandum of M-83 Comments for MPOHT_12.23.2024.pdf](#)

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

Greetings!

Attached is additional testimony from MCDOT on the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, specifically focused on M-83.

Thank you!

Andrew Bossi, P.E. *(he/him)*
Senior Engineer, Transportation Policy, Director's Office
Montgomery County Department of Transportation
101 Monroe Street, 10th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

I am working a mixture of in-office and telework.
My most effective means of communication is by email.



For more helpful Cybersecurity Resources, visit:
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cybersecurity>



Marc Elrich
County Executive

Christopher R. Conklin
Director

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION


MEMORANDUM

December 23, 2024

TO: Artie Harris, Chair
Montgomery Planning Board

FROM: Haley Peckett, Deputy Director for Transportation Policy
Department of Transportation (MCDOT)

SUBJECT: Master Plan of Highways and Transitways
Public Hearing Draft – MCDOT Comments


Haley Peckett (Dec 23, 2024 11:44 EST)

Thank you for the additional public process considering the M-83 (Midcounty Highway) corridor as part of the update to the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT). We wanted to expand upon our previous comments regarding this corridor:

- 1) **EXTENT:** We recommend the removal of both segments of M-83: the northern span between Montgomery Village Avenue and Ridge Road, as well as the southern span from Shady Grove Road to the Intercounty Connector (MD 200).

We believe our ongoing investments in transit along MD 355, as well as other Corridor Connectors identified in the I-270 Corridor Forward Plan, all represent a more sustainable path forward for connecting the Clarksburg, Germantown, and Gaithersburg areas.

The inclusion of the M-83 corridor does not reflect the road network vision as established by Thrive Montgomery 2050, which seeks to reduce the mileage of roadways such as M-83 in favor of streets that are more conducive toward walking, biking, and transit. Eliminating the corridor will also reduce substantial environmental impacts on trees, wetlands, contiguous forests, and parkland.

Office of the Director

101 Monroe Street, 10th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850 · 240-777-7170 · 240-777-7178 Fax
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcdot


montgomerycountymd.gov/311 301-251-4850 TTY

- 2) **BIKEWAY:** Eliminating M-83 from the MPOHT will not affect the master-planned bikeway, which is included in the separate Bicycle Master Plan (published in 2018). However, if M-83 is eliminated, it may be prudent to consider a future update to the Bicycle Master Plan focused on the bikeway. MCDOT believes there would be value in an alternative designation, such as an Off-Street Trail, which could be substantially implemented by Park & Planning and, therefore, ease the management of environmental impacts while allowing greater flexibility in design.
- 3) **ROW:** Substantial portions of the M-83 corridor’s rights-of-way have already been acquired, largely via dedication or reservation. From a cursory review, it appears that many of these rights-of-way have been acquired for *public use* rather than explicitly for a highway. As the bikeway would remain in the Bicycle Master Plan even with the removal of M-83, many of the rights-of-way may be unaffected by the removal of M-83 from the MPOHT. A more detailed review of each plat would be required to confirm the precise impacts for each acquired property. Also, per the previous comment, a future update to the Bicycle Master Plan might identify a narrower right-of-way which could allow for returning excess rights-of-way to their respective property owners.

We appreciate your continued consideration of this issue. Thank you for Montgomery Planning’s partnership in this process as we continue working together to enhance the multimodal transportation network in the Upcounty area.

cc: Corey Pitts, MCDOT
Andrew Bossi, MCDOT
Claire Iseli, CEX
Meredith Wellington, CEX
Dale Tibbitts, CEX
Kara Olsen-Salazar, DGS
Sofia Aldrich, Montgomery Planning

From: [Trudy Frenz](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: M-83 Public Hearing #3, January 9, 2025
Date: Friday, January 3, 2025 7:35:53 PM

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

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a homeowner writing in support of the removal of the unbuilt portions of the Mid County Highway from the county Master Plan. My husband and I have lived on Beauvoir Court since July, 2002. The current access to the ICC is adequate without the extension. The wooded area and paths to the neighborhood parks are true neighborhood assets and should not be lost to more pavement. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Gertrude Frenz
21 Beauvoir Court
Derwood, MD 20855

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [Build M-83 on the Master Plan Route](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Testimony for Public Hearing #3, January 9, 2025: Master Plan of Highways and Transitways - 2024 Technical Update
Date: Saturday, January 4, 2025 5:16:19 PM

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

After living in the Downcounty for 23 years, we moved to the Upcounty 20 years ago. Based on Master Plans, we purchased a new home in Goshen.

When I went to college in Philadelphia, I used light rail and the subway every day. The Master Plan was to have light rail extending from the Shady Grove Metrorail to Clarksburg. "Corridor Cities" justified the explosive Upcounty development, but was never built.

A quarter century ago, Goshen Road was identified as having twice the average vehicular accident rate and five times the pedestrian accident rates. The Master Plan showed improvements, but nothing has ever been done and we don't even have sidewalks along most of the road.

According to the Master Plan, the Snowden Farm Parkway was built in Clarksburg, but the 5.6 mile gap in the Eastern Arterial remains. When we moved to Goshen, millions of dollars were being spent on studying multiple routing alternatives for M-83, so we thought that the road would surely be built. After years of studies, the final recommendation supported building M-83 on the Master Plan Route.

The Goshen community was shocked when the county allowed our Goshen Branch Stream Valley Park to be turned into wetlands. To offset the Inter County Connector loss of wetlands, over 100 trees a foot in diameter or larger were cut down and about four feet of soil was removed just three blocks from my home. It's ridiculous to allow M-83 objectors to give as a reason that one acre of wetlands will be lost, when Goshen has already donated 25 acres of parkland to establish new wetlands.

The current traffic on our rural roads is horrendous. Electronic speed limit signs are being ignored. The bridge on Brink Road over Seneca Creek carries as many vehicles per day per lane as the Key Bridge that collapsed in Baltimore.

Build M-83 on the Master Plan Route!

**Robert Nelson
22104 Goshen School Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20882-1404**

BuildM83@gmail.com

From: [rg.steinman](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024 Technical Update – Public Hearing #3
Date: Sunday, January 5, 2025 4:27:36 PM
Attachments: [M-83 testmy, rgSteinman,jan9,2025.docx](#)

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

Commissioners,

Attached please find my written testimony for

[Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024 Technical Update – Public Hearing #3](#)

Thank you and please respond to let me know you have received my written testimony, and that it will appear in the public record.

~ Sincerely,

Roberta G Steinman

Roberta G (rg) Steinman M-83 TESTIMONY – January 9, 2025

Date: January 9, 2025

Public Hearing Testimony: Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024, Technical Update

From: Roberta G (rg) Steinman, 9009 Fairview Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Commissioners,

I recommend removal of proposed M83/Midcounty Highway Extended, in its entirety, from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways.

The Bigger Picture: We are now in an age of multiple environmental crises, which will only intensify in the coming years. Fossil fuels have enabled us to grow beyond the ecological limits of Planet Earth, resulting in what scientists call “overshoot.” Overshoot occurs when “humanity uses resources at a faster pace than ecosystems can renew and generates waste at a faster pace than ecosystems can absorb.”

This is exactly what we have been doing with our natural areas in Montgomery County, as well as globally. We have been cutting down our forested ecosystems, destroying natural habitats and losing biodiversity. Biodiversity – all the living things that make up the Web of Life – the ecological foundation upon which life depends.

The combination of deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and rising temperatures is a dangerous and unsustainable path. Yet this is exactly the path we would follow if M-83 were to be built.

The proposed 5-mile northern extension of Mid-County Highway (M-83) entails a sweeping scale of deforestation and habitat loss, including stream valley riparian areas, wetlands, woodlands and thickets, suburban parks and backyards.

- **M-83 would result in a huge loss of forests as the road cuts through five parks**, including two M-NCPPC stream valley parks, Great Seneca SVP and North Germantown Greenway SVP. The other parks that the road would impact include South Valley Park (Montgomery Village Foundation), Blohm Park (City of Gaithersburg) and Wildcat Branch SVP (M-NCPPC).
- **M-83 would sever the most significant natural link remaining for ecological connectivity** between the 300-acre North Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park and the expansive Great Seneca Park. Wildlife connectivity is a lifeline for the migration of both flora and fauna (mammals, reptiles, amphibians). M-83 would sever this ecological connectivity that is critical for maintaining healthy populations and for sustaining ecosystems. Connectivity allows wildlife to exchange genes and reproduce, which promotes biological diversity, and it helps species respond to environmental changes and climate change by giving them room to move and migrate.
- **Cutting down these forests would exacerbate climate warming and undermine County climate goals to reduce CO2 emissions.** Forests are our first line of defense in removing the heat-trapping greenhouse gases, CO2 and methane, from the atmosphere. Trees act as a carbon sink by storing carbon in their leaves, roots, trunks, and in the soil, and this mitigates rising planetary temperature. Building roads where the forests are means eliminating the capacity of two of our three natural carbon sinks – forests and soil (and oceans) – to absorb greenhouse gases.
- **The forested parcels that remain would be fragmented** and would no longer be suitable forest interior habitat for wildlife that require large unbroken tracts of forest to maintain viable populations (birds, mammals, amphibians).
- **M-83 would severely and permanently degrade six streams** that it crosses over its 5-mile course (listed from north to south: Wildcat Branch, Dayspring Creek, Brandermill Tributary, Great Seneca Creek, Whetstone Run and Watkins Run), and it would degrade and destroy numerous wetlands along the stream valley floodplains including Dayspring Creek, Wildcat Branch, Great Seneca Creek and Whetstone Run.
- **Cutting down the forests to build M-83 would disrupt the water cycle, degrade the water quality and reduce water availability in the area, ultimately affecting the local climate.** Forests are the best land use for water

Roberta G (rg) Steinman M-83 TESTIMONY – January 9, 2025

quality, and they are integral to the water cycle. Trees infiltrate water into the soil, reduce surface runoff and prevent erosion. This, in turn, feeds the local aquifer and maintains stream health and the good water quality necessary to support sensitive aquatic species. Cutting down forests to build roads disrupts the water cycle by significantly reducing the amount of water that is absorbed and released back into the atmosphere through transpiration, leading to decreased rainfall, increased polluted surface runoff from the roads into the streams, soil erosion, and potential flooding.

In short, building M-83 would cause massive ecological devastation to this large and contiguous forest ecosystem. The natural world is the basis of our existence. We cannot benefit from the destruction of our life support systems. The most important thing to do right now is to preserve the last remaining natural areas -- everywhere. It's up to you to take the sustainable, longer-term view. **Stop this road from ever being built.** Conserve and restore natural systems rather than further degrading them. Give future generations a reason to thank you.

What's left is not enough, but it's all we've got, and nothing less than all of it will do. - Robert Michael Pyle

END

From: [Bob Nelson](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Testimony for Public Hearing #3, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways -2024 Technical Update
Date: Monday, January 6, 2025 9:16:55 AM

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

Bob Nelson's Testimony to MC Planning Board - January 9, 2025

I'm Bob Nelson, Past Chair of the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board (UCAB) and a member of the Greater Goshen Civic Association (GGCA).

After living in the Downcounty for 23 years, we moved Upcounty nearly 20 years ago. Based on Master Plans, we purchased a new home in Goshen.

When I went to college in Philadelphia, I used light rail and the subway every day. The Master Plan was to have light rail extending from the Shady Grove Metrorail to Clarksburg. "Corridor Cities' justified the explosive Upcounty development, but was never built.

A quarter century ago, Goshen Road was identified as having twice the average vehicular accident rate and five times the pedestrian accident rate. The Master Plan showed improvements, but nothing has ever been done and we don't even have sidewalks along most of the road.

According to the Master Plan, the Snowden Farm Parkway was built in Clarksburg, but the 5.6 mile gap in the Eastern Arterial remains. When we moved to Goshen, millions of dollars were being spent on studying multiple routing alternatives for M-83, so we thought that the road surely would be built. After years of studies, the final recommendation supported building M-83 on the Master Plan Route and the Montgomery Planning Board supported this recommendation 11 years ago this month.

The Goshen community was shocked when the county allowed our Goshen Branch Stream Valley Park to be turned into wetlands. To offset the Inter County Connector loss of wetlands, over 100 trees a foot in diameter or larger were cut down and about four feet of soil was removed just three blocks from my home. It's ridiculous that M-83 objectors give as a reason that one acre of wetlands will be lost, when Goshen has already donated 25 acres of parkland to establish new wetlands.

The current traffic on our rural roads is horrendous. Electronic speed limit signs are being ignored. The bridge on Brink Road over Seneca Creek carries as many vehicles per day per lane as the Key Bridge that collapsed in Baltimore.

Each year I have been testifying to the Montgomery County Council at the Capital Improvement Program hearings that M-83 needs to be built. The official M-83 cost estimate of \$371M is much higher than the costs of the recent dualization of Maryland Route 32 in Howard County. MDOT SHA finished the nine-mile project in 2022 and the total project cost was \$172 million, of which \$139 million was construction costs. Bioswales to filter and manage stormwater were constructed and 14,000 trees were planted.

The speed limit on the already completed section of the Mid-County Highway is up to 50 miles per hour. A bus on Rt. 355 with a speed limit of 30 mph cannot compete in efficiency with a bus on M-83 traveling 50 mph.

At the Federal Government level there is a new Department of Government Efficiency. When prudently allocating limited resources, I think that the funds should be used to benefit the maximum number of people. There is no other proposed Upcounty Project that will benefit as many people as M-83.

Build M-83 on the Master Plan Route!

Robert Nelson, 22104 Goshen School Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20882-1404

From: [Nanci Wilkinson](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: Master Plan Public Hearing January 9, 2025
Date: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:37:10 PM

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

Dear Planning Board Chairman and Members,

I support the removal of unbuilt sections of Midcounty Highway Extended (M-83) including the northern extension between Montgomery Village Avenue and Ridge Road as well as the southern extension between MD 200 and Shady Grove Road from the master plan.

The central issue facing Montgomery County as well as the nation is how to protect nature from human interference that has placed us in the possible extermination of the planet as we know it.

Montgomery County has a chance to show its moral and environmental leadership in the fight against climate change on the local level. Refusing to build more highway infrastructure supports the goals of The Climate Action Plan to “cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2027 and 100% by 2035”. Further, refusing to allow M-83 to remain in the Master Plan supports the Maryland Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022, which establishes the most ambitious GHG reduction goals of any state in the United States.

This opportunity for success in the long hard fight to restore the planet’s natural ecosystems including, parkland, forests,

habitats and pollinator and native plant areas will pass by this ONE TIME for this ONE HIGHWAY. It will have a cascading effect on other attempts to destroy natural systems locally and statewide.

Please support the removal of M-83 from the master plan.

Thank you.

Nanci Wilkinson
5502 Glenwood Rd
Bethesda MD 20817

nanciwilkinson@gmail.com
703 850 7750

From: lifeonearth@verizon.net
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: public hearing testimony from John Parrish
Date: Monday, January 6, 2025 7:09:09 PM
Attachments: [M-83 Mid-County Highway, John Parrish.docx](#)

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

Please see attached public hearing testimony from John Parrish for the January 9th hearing on the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways - 2024 Technical Update (Hearing #3).

Thank you - John Parrish

January 9, 2025

Public Hearing Testimony: Master Plan of Highways and Transitways – 2024
Technical Update

From: John Parrish, 9009 Fairview Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Commissioners,

I am a lifelong resident of Montgomery County who cares deeply about preserving our remaining natural heritage. Please remove M-83 from the Master Plan of Highways due to the extensive and irreversible impacts to the natural environment if built.

Professional Background

I am a professional botanist and ecologist having worked in the National Capital Region for the National Park Service - Center For Urban Ecology as well as for the Maryland Natural Heritage Program at Maryland Department of Natural Resources. I've also worked for Arlington County, Virginia and the City of Alexandria to develop natural resource management plans to help safeguard their few remaining natural areas. I have served on the advisory group for Montgomery County's Legacy Open Space Master Plan since 2007.

In the mid-1990's, I worked for the Maryland DNR to conduct inventories for rare plants and significant habitats on twenty M-NCPPC parklands in Montgomery County. The findings are published in a document titled *Inventory for Rare Plants and Significant Habitats on M-NCPPC Park Lands in Montgomery County, Maryland – February 1997*. This report was funded by M-NCPPC and helped form the basis for designating the best natural areas and biodiversity areas within the M-NCPPC park system.

Ecological Consequences of M-83 to M-NCPPC Parklands

In 2003 I was hired by the Church of the Saviour to assess potential impacts to the natural environment by M-83 in the vicinity of the Dayspring Silent Retreat Center including the North Germantown Greenway and Great Seneca Park. The findings of this work are compiled in a 2004 report titled *Select Environmental Inventory and Impact Analysis for Amphibians, Forest Birds, Rare Flora and Significant Habitats in North Germantown Greenway & Great Seneca Park in the vicinity of the proposed M-83 Highway Alignment, Middlebrook Road to Brink Road, Montgomery County, Maryland*. I'd like to share a few of my findings so you may appreciate the ecological values of the parklands in this area and better understand what will be lost if M-83 is built.

Few people know that a study commissioned by the National Park Service published in 1971 set out to evaluate superior deciduous forest tracts in the Eastern United

States as part of an effort to designate National Natural Landmarks.¹ Five sites in the Oak-Chestnut Forest Region in the Piedmont of Montgomery County, Maryland were evaluated as part of this effort. While none of these sites merited National Natural Landmark status, four of the five sites were recognized as important to preserve at the State and County levels. These sites became part of the exceptional parklands we now know as Rachel Carson Conservation Park, Hoyles Mill Conservation Park, McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area and the Great Seneca and North Germantown Greenway Parks. A forest tract named Blunt Road Woods in the 1971 report comprises a large part of what we now call North Germantown Greenway and Great Seneca Park along Dayspring Creek adjacent to the Dayspring Silent Retreat Center. This is an area I inventoried in 2003 for the Church of the Saviour. M-83 would fragment and destroy this special place. The Blunt Road Woods site is described in the 1971 report as follows:

*“It is an excellent example of an oak-hickory forest with an understory of *Nyssa sylvatica* and *Acer rubrum*. It is particularly unusual because the dead chestnuts were not cut but were allowed to stand until they fell over. It did not appear to be in immediate danger of destruction. Priority 2.”*

I am happy to report this forest still harbors living American chestnut trees, some of which bear nuts. Apparently, in 1971, the authors were unaware that M-83 was planned to bisect this forest.

M-83 would destroy and fragment this large forest tract that harbors significant habitats such as bedrock outcrops, wetlands and glades. This area is recognized as a designated “biodiversity area” by M-NCPPC due to its scenic value, unusual habitats and the presence of uncommon and rare species.² I documented ten species of amphibians including 7 frogs and 3 salamanders. Nine of the ten amphibians depend on wetlands for breeding, including wetlands that would be destroyed by M-83. I documented 21 species of forest-dwelling birds including 11 that are forest-interior dependent species. Nine of these are “neo-tropical” migratory songbirds that depend on large unbroken forests to maintain viable populations. Nine of the forest-dwelling bird species are listed by M-NCPPC as “bird species of greatest conservation need.”³ These are the Red-shouldered Hawk, Barred Owl, Pileated

¹ Keever, K. C., *A study of the Mixed Mesophytic, Western Mesophytic and Oak-Chestnut Regions of the Eastern Deciduous Forest, Including a review of the Vegetation and Sites Recommended as Potential Natural Landmarks, the National Park Service, Washington D.C., 1971.* (See p. 147 for description of the Blunt Road Woods.)

<https://npshistory.com/publications/vegetation/eastern-deciduous-forests.pdf>

² Natural Resource Management Plan for Natural Areas in M-NCPPC Parkland in Montgomery County, Maryland, Park Planning & Stewardship Division, M-NCPPC, February 2013. See p.6 (description of a biodiversity area, p.29 (map), p.32 (table describing the N. Germantown Greenway & Great Seneca Park SVU2 biodiversity area)

https://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2013/documents/20130221_Natural_Resources_Management_Plan.pdf

³ Ibid, p.44-47 Bird species of greatest conservation need in Montgomery County.

Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, Louisiana Waterthrush, Summer Tanager and Scarlet Tanager.

I found four state-rare plant species occurring in this area including Black Ash, Bitternut, American Chestnut and Bashful Sedge as well as forty-eight additional species considered to be uncommon in Montgomery County. These species and the habitats that support them are in jeopardy if M-83 is built.

The two parklands (North Germantown Greenway and Great Seneca Park) along Dayspring Creek that M-83 would traverse support over 240 species of native plants including 15 ferns, 5 orchids and 70 species of trees and shrubs. Potential negative impacts to these species and the habitats that support them are fully described in my report. I would be happy to discuss these impacts in more depth with you and your staff.

To add insult to injury, M-83 would invade the Agricultural Reserve and degrade water quality in the Wildcat Branch watershed. Wildcat Branch is one of the few self-sustaining trout streams left in the County. All of these significant habitats, native biodiversity and the Ag Reserve are entrusted to M-NCPPC to take care of for future generations. If they are destroyed they are gone forever.

For sixty years, this road has not been built due to inadequate funding, severe environmental impacts and a lack of political support. It is time to put this road to rest and get on with creating non-highway transportation solutions and stop extending false hope to up-county residents that M-83 is somehow the answer to traffic congestion.

Please delete M-83 from the master plans to safeguard our natural heritage.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

John Parrish

Montgomery County Planning Board
Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) – 2024 Technical Update – Public Hearing #3
with Regard to: M-83 Extended- the Northern extension (the Northern and Central
Segments) and Southern extension.

9 January 2025

Testimony:

Against the Removal of Midcounty Extended, the Northern and Southern extensions, from
Montgomery County's MPOHT

Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reedy Dr, 14th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902

Public Hearing location:
Upcounty Regional Services Center
12900 Middlebrook Road
Germantown, MD 20874

Paula Messenger

Derwood resident and homeowner since 1989

Testifying on behalf of myself and the Derwood Neighborhood Community Alliance (DNCA)

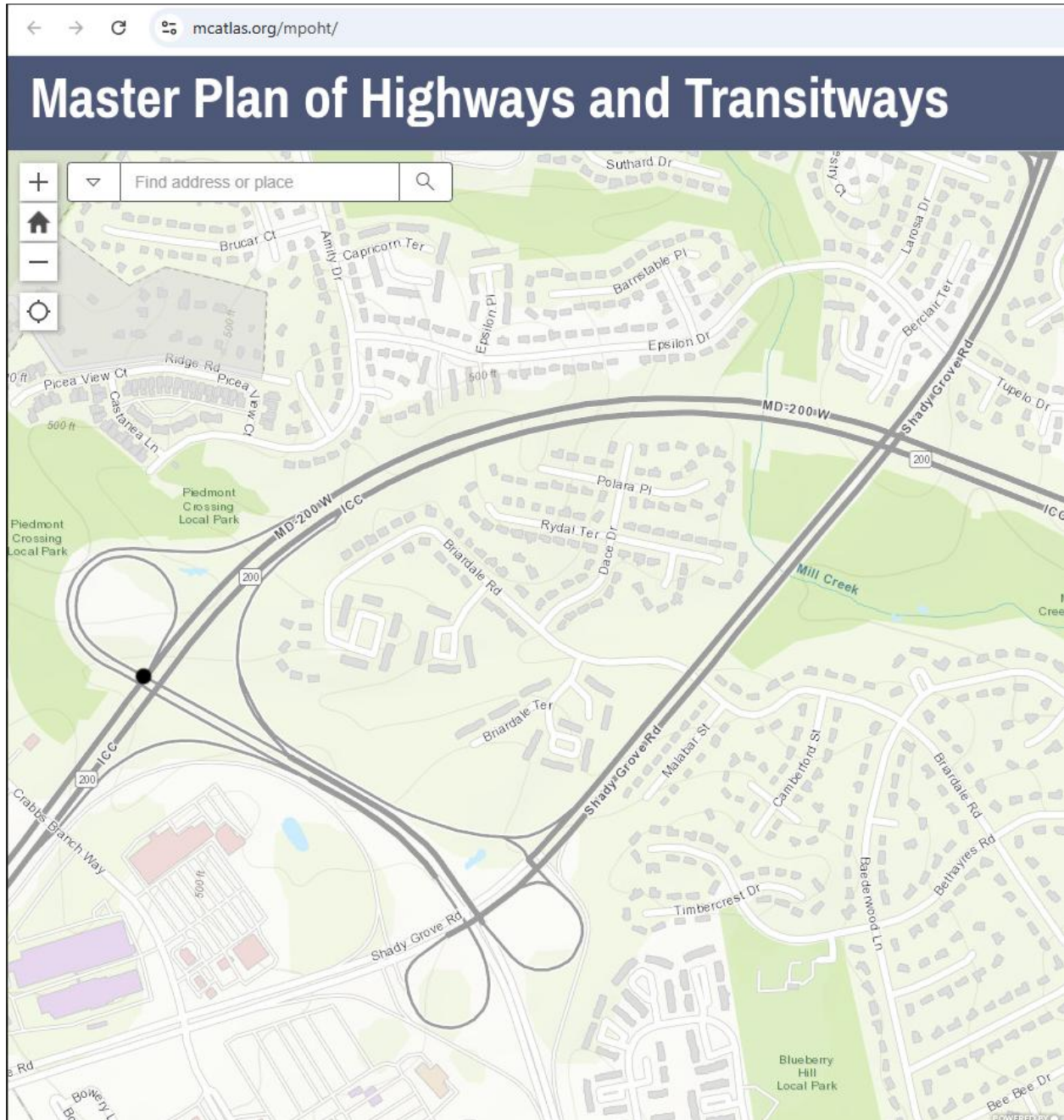
Against the Removal of the M-83 Northern extension (the Northern and Central segments)
and Southern extension from Montgomery County's MPOHT

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

At the previous public hearings on the subject of removing the unconstructed Midcounty Highway Extended from the County's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) we have heard many comments.

We, as a people, frequently respond to change with a "not in my backyard" approach. That is, "we are only opposed to a project because it is close to our home(s) and not because of genuine concerns about its impact".

I'd like to take you into my backyard. My property, purchased over 35 years ago, is situated within a network of intersecting major arterial/connector roads: Shady Grove Rd, the Metro Access Rd, and now the Intercountry Connector (ICC)/MD 200.



<https://www.mcatlas.org/mpoht/>

Despite these major roadways, the wildlife is abundant.

On any given day, I have many deer, many rabbits, many squirrels, red fox, and various species of birds in and through my yard – and on my deck – as well as a stray cat or two.

Their presence is evidenced not only by what they have left behind, but by their tracks, whether in the gardens or in the snow. This past December, as I returned home after 9 p.m. one evening, four deer sprinted out of my yard, and a few days later, just before 2 a.m., a red fox trotted across my back yard. It is not infrequent that the outdoor motion-sensor lights are activated by the wildlife, in yards around the neighborhood.

I have installed metal fencing surrounding my flowerbeds to keep the animals from enjoying my gardening efforts more than I do, and have enclosed much of my flowering-plant areas (azaleas, etc.) with fencing, to prevent access by the animals who come for the buffet.

My point is, any concern that M-83 Extended will negatively impact wildlife is mute – the animals have and will prevail.

My house is 1.6 miles from the Shady Grove metro station; it is still a walkable distance for me. Although some can benefit from the metro and public transportation, as my husband did, during my career, I worked in Virginia: in Tysons Corner, Merrifield, Seven Corners and at Telegraph Road. Although local and convenient, using the metro was not a viable option.

A previous speaker indicated, I believe, that she had driven I-270 south and taken the metro to the November Public Hearing #3, in Wheaton. Please recognize that although the trip was during rush hour, it was in a counter-flow direction, going against the direction of most traffic. I question how many people: those who have testified, those on the Council, and those on the Planning Board, have driven to Germantown and/or Clarksburg in traffic, during rush hour. How many truly understand the concerns of those who are Against removing M-83 Extended from the MPOHT?

I would also like to note that those speakers residing in the southern portion of the County, who have shopping, bus routes, and metro stations within walking distance of their homes, as well as a network of roadways, are asking you to deny their fellow County residents those same benefits.

Those who bought homes in the County whether decades ago, as I did, or more recently, were well aware of the Master Plan, the County's Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and the inclusion of the M-83 Extended, and, with full understanding, made their decision to buy.

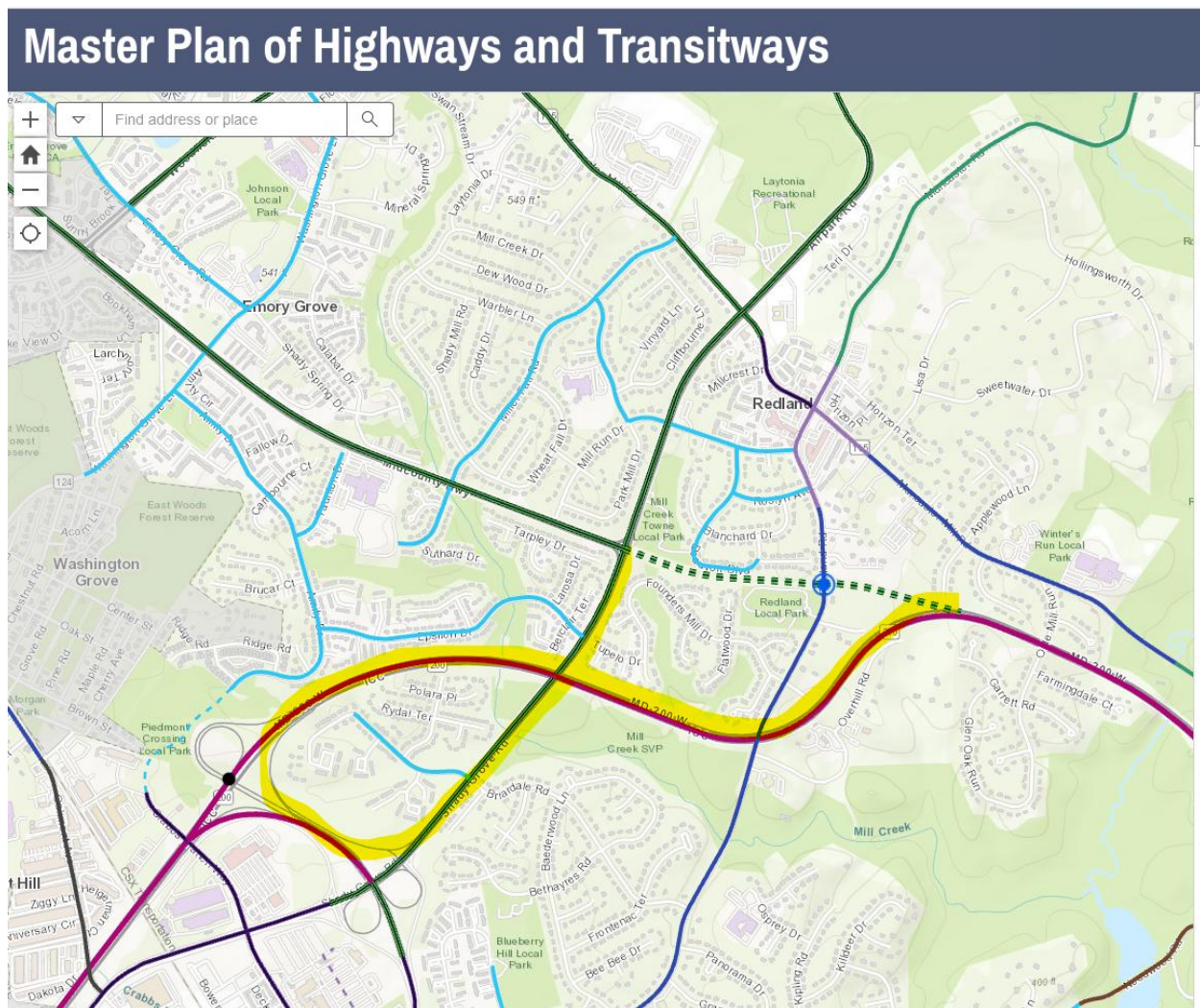
In addition to the growth in Clarksburg, the recent 102+ acre Lakeforest Mall Property redevelopment and Master Plan; which calls for new commercial spaces, retail, restaurants, and up to 1,600 residential units, will bring increased traffic and demand additional local infrastructure.

It is important to note that there are in fact two portions of M-83 under consideration: the Northern extension and the Southern extension (the northern comprising the Northern and Central segments). I ask you *not to remove* the M-83 extensions from the MPOHT without replacing them with a viable transportation alternative. In addition, the development of public transportation and/or bike lanes does not have to be exclusive of implementing either of the M-83 extension(s); a bus rapid transit network can utilize M-83 to improve user accessibility.

I also recommend to the Planning Board and the County Council that the issue of removing the M-83 Northern extension and the M-83 Southern extension from the County MPOHT be assessed separately. Retaining the M-83 Southern extension will provide access to and from the ICC/MD 200 for those residing north of Shady Grove Road. I ask you *not to remove it* from the MPOHT.

These additional comments are made on behalf of a group of Derwood residents, the Derwood Neighborhood Community Alliance (DNCA), concerned about the impact of traffic and transportation decisions, and safety in Derwood (an area just north of Rockville, southeast of Gaithersburg, southwest of Olney, and northwest of the greater Silver Spring area).

We recommend that any decisions concerning the removal of the M-83 extensions (the northern, central and southern segments) from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways (MPOHT) should be based on current data and not decade-old, pre-COVID studies.



<https://www.mcatlas.org/mpoht/>

Again, there are two extensions of M-83 being considered for removal from the MPOHT; the Northern extension and the Southern extension. We believe that these two, separate extensions should be considered separately/decoupled and we are *against removing* the M-83 southern extension from the MPOHT. Removing the southern portion of M-83 has the potential to increase traffic and congestion in the area.

Currently, access to and from the ICC/MD 200 requires vehicles in the surrounding areas to use a convoluted route that includes Shady Grove Road and the Metro Access Road. (see map above)

Please note, the following is from:

Montgomery County's Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation & Engineering (MCDOT DTE), and
Montgomery County's Vision Zero Plan

"Areas along [Shady Grove Rd] have been identified in the Montgomery County Vision Zero plan as dangerous with multiple collisions involving vehicles and pedestrians resulting in serious injury or death."

Reference: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/ShadyGroveStudy/index.html>

Shady Grove Road, from the "Metro Access Road to Midcounty Highway [is] identified in the County's Vision Zero High Injury Network (HIN)", which "highlights the roads with the highest serious and fatal crash rates", and "Shady Grove Rd from Frederick Rd to Midcounty Hwy" is in the County's Top 10 list of "County-maintained Priority Roads".

Reference: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/ShadyGroveStudy/index.html>

Reference: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/vz2030-plan.pdf>

The Shady Grove Rd intersections with Tupelo/Epsilon roads and Brairdale Road are high incident areas.

Reference: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/ShadyGroveStudy/index.html>

Reference: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/vz2030-plan.pdf>

As such, this portion of Shady Grove Rd is included in the County's Vision Zero Plan with the "goal of ending serious injury and death on our roadways"; the "High Injury Network Projects", which are a priority within the Plan are to "implement safety countermeasures on identified high-risk road segments and intersections".

Reference:

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/FY24-25_Vision_Zero_Workplan.pdf

Additional reference:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/Resources/Files/vz2030-plan.pdf>

Many of us who have lived in the area, for several decades, and have continually expressed our concerns about safety issues on Shady Grove Rd are grateful that the County's approach has changed from one of keeping traffic moving to one of recognizing that the incidence of roadway fatalities and serious injuries is unacceptably high and that changes are required to calm traffic and increase the safety of everyone.

The Planning Board's recommendation and the Council's decision must encompass and integrate with the County's Vision Zero plan – "No traffic deaths by 2030".

We are *against* removing the M-83 Southern extension from the MPOHT, and support *retaining* the M-83 Southern extension and future construction of the roadway with appropriate environmental mitigation.

We recommend this entry and exit from ICC/MD 200, which will provide direct access to and from the existing M-83 and Shady Grove Road, reduce travel distance to and from ICC/MD 200, and alleviate unnecessary traffic on Shady Grove Rd - an already "dangerous" road.

We further recommend that any future development of the M-83 Southern extension and ICC/MD 200 access should be implemented without an interchange at Redland Road. When that time comes, we are more than willing to provide our suggestions regarding the alignment of the M-83 Southern extension.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Amy Presley
23506 Sugar View Drive
Clarksburg, MD 20871

January 7, 2025

Attention: Montgomery County Planning Board

Subject: Importance of Retaining M83 and its Extended Rights-of-Way in the MPOHT

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Planning Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for the retention of the M83 corridor and its extended rights-of-way (both Northern and Central) within the MPOHT.

The Clarksburg Master Plan explicitly relied on the inclusion of M83 as a critical component of the area's transportation infrastructure. M83 was envisioned as a crucial element in the "Rungs of the Ladder" concept, designed to efficiently direct cross-county traffic and alleviate congestion on existing roadways. The promise of M83 was used to appease existing Damascus residents who were opposed to the Clarksburg Town Center development due to the additional traffic to be created, and also to ensure that the additional high-density of the development would have alternate cross-county connectivity without relying solely upon the already congested Rt 355 and I270 corridor.

Clarksburg Town Center was initially planned to be an area where one could "live, work, eat, and play." . . . a place where local offices and retail were to serve the community. This in itself would have been a way to mitigate some of the traffic generated by such high density development. However, due to "environmental concerns" regarding 10-Mile Creek, Clarksburg lost its proposed office space development. Further, the Hospital designation went to Germantown instead of Clarksburg. Both actions eliminated many potential jobs from Clarksburg. Yet, the same high density that was to have had employment opportunities within the community now has to travel elsewhere for employment – more traffic funneled onto 355 and 270.

Sadly, Clarksburg has already been the victim of many inequities as compared to its Germantown and Rockville neighbors. We have not received many of the promised elements upon which the Town Center was predicated. To date, there is still no library, no town center retail, and incomplete "connector" roads previously promised as support for the residents.

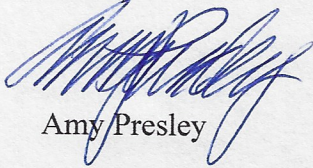
The removal of M83 or any of its extended rights of way from the MPOHT would have significant negative consequences including mounting congestion on existing roads. Please don't listen to the loud voices of those outside of the Clarksburg Town Center who allege that no or limited testimony from us equates to approval to remove those rights of way. To the contrary, residents of the Clarksburg Town Center continue to rely upon The Planning Board and other County agencies to uphold what was promised to us within the Master Plan. Most people don't

realize that this important connection is even threatened. Please don't let them down by removing another of the promised supporting elements of the Master Plan.

I urge the Montgomery County Planning Board to recognize the critical importance of M83 to the success of the Clarksburg Master Plan and the overall transportation network in Montgomery County. I strongly urge you retain M83 and its extended rights-of-way in the MPOHT and advocate for its inclusion in future transportation plans.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amy Presley", written in a cursive style.

Amy Presley