



North Bethesda Flash BRT Public Open House Meeting Summary

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Event Overview

On Wednesday, June 18, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) hosted a public meeting for the North Bethesda Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project at Walter Johnson High School in North Bethesda, MD due to its location on the project corridor and being accessible by public transit service. Fifty-eight community members attended the public meeting. This event played a vital role within the MCDOT's comprehensive public engagement strategy for the project, underscoring the importance of transparent communication and community involvement throughout the planning process.

Building on themes and discussions from the previous meeting, the session focused on the opportunities and challenges with each of the build alternatives and how the North Bethesda BRT project fits into the overall BRT network. The primary purpose of the public meeting was to share information about alternative analysis, intentionally gather community feedback regarding the BRT alternatives along the North Bethesda corridor, and provide a platform for community members to share their insights on the corridor, inquire about the project, and understand the project status and timeline in a transparent public forum.

The meeting was structured in an open-house style to allow participants to view detailed project materials at their convenience during the dedicated meeting timeframe. A detailed [presentation](#) was offered 30 minutes after the start of the meeting to provide context and updates on the project's progress. Following the presentation, a brief question-and-answer session allowed community members to engage directly with project representatives.

The public open house was advertised via several email blasts. Additionally, direct mailer postcards were sent to residents and property owners leading up to the event. The event was also advertised through flyers that were distributed at pop-up events and through flyer drops."

Open House Display Boards

Eleven display [boards](#) were placed around the room to share background information, analysis results, and explain the benefits and challenges of the BRT alternatives along the North Bethesda corridor. Participants were able to walk around before and after the presentation and discuss questions or concerns they had with the staff. The following boards were available at the public meeting:



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- Program Overview
- What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)?
- Project Study Area
- Project Purpose
- North Bethesda BRT Termini Screening
- Build Alternative 1: Median Lanes
- Build Alternative 2: Curbside Lanes
- Preparing for the Future of North Bethesda
- Connecting with Other BRT Projects
- Summary of Design Alternatives
- Project Timeline and Next Steps

Presentation Q&A

Q: On Alternative 1 (median lanes) how do you board/depart the bus? Does that mean that there is an additional crossing/stop?

A: Staff explained that riders would cross the street from the curb to the median BRT station to board. Staff then explained how this differs from a traditional curb-side bus stop.

Q: If right-of-way is needed, where would it come from, and which side?

A: The needed right-of-way varies by location. During more detailed design, the County would aim to reduce property impacts as much as possible.

Q: At previous meetings, there was discussion around increasing the frequency of buses and not introducing capital projects in this corridor. What was that?

A: That approach would be consistent with the TSM alternative, which is still on the table for consideration for selection as an outcome of this study and potential future implementation. This would involve increasing the existing service frequency on Ride On Route 26 during peak periods.

Q: Where does that decision get made on the timeline?

A: The North Bethesda Alternatives Analysis report will go to the Planning Board and Council (expected in Fall 2025), and the Council tells the Department of Transportation what to do if there are funds.

Q: What is the difference between the TSM and no-build?

A: TSM results in more/improved transit service, but no major capital expenses. No-build means nothing changes to the corridor.



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Q: What will the planning department do exactly? What will be presented to them?

A: They will participate in the meetings to ensure consistency with the master plan. The Planning Board will review reports and analysis and compare them to the master plan. They will also hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to County Council.

Q: What studies have been done to determine potential number of users? Where are the riders coming from, or projected to come from?

A: There are specific boards around the room that provide details on how ridership was developed and how ridership looks based on other potential connections to this corridor.

Q: Reacting to the existing condition, did you talk about the 60,000 additional people in the corridor? How does that play into the forecast? Is it already decided that those 60,000 people are coming?

A: We have a near term and a long-term forecast. More people need more ways to get around.

Presentation Comments

Individuals provided the following comments on the presentation:

- Lack of detail in the design, the community desires more information.
- More information on the No Build/TSM is needed in the material.
- Some residents stated that they were very concerned about the bike lanes before and during implementation, but that they are used to the change in the traffic pattern. Several residents stated that the impacts are not as significant as many originally feared.
- The County should increase bus service. Nothing else needs to be done. Don't disrupt homeowners and spend excessive funds.
- Only improve the bus service! The community is concerned, and BRT is not needed in this corridor.
- Preference is for additional buses only in peak times. What is being presented is preferential to build alternative.
- Discussion around logistics with intersections on the median running alternative.

Comments and Feedback

Along with asking questions and providing feedback, there was a physical comment box and forms that attendees could fill out. For those that needed more time to draft their comments, the physical comment forms could be mailed in later. Online comments were also accepted, plus, a survey specific to the North Bethesda BRT project was available for participants to complete.



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Next Steps/Action Items

- Summarize survey input
- Finalize alternative analysis report for planning department review

Meeting Photos





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