

**County's Own Cost Assessment Confirms:
Two Transit Lines for the Price of One Would Be Possible With Bus Rapid Transit**

Montgomery County could have two mass transit lines for the price of one if the County puts taxpayers' money into bus rapid transit instead of light rail, a study released by the County last week confirms.

The report, released to the County's Purple Line Advisory Committee, compares the Purple Line and Corridors City Transitway projects with other projects in the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) pipeline, rating the cost-effectiveness of various options. It shows that bus rapid transit lines have a much higher chance of receiving federal funding than more expensive light rail transit alternatives.

Proponents of transit alternatives that would preserve the Capital Crescent Trail hailed the study's findings that bus rapid transit for the Purple Line on the Jones Bridge Road alignment between New Carrollton and Bethesda would fare much better in the FTA's evaluation process than light rail long the Capital Crescent Trail.

The study shows that bus rapid transit lines for the Purple Line and Corridors City Transitway could both be built for a combined total of under \$1 billion, while light rail on the Capital Crescent Trail would alone cost \$1.6-\$1.8 billion.

To be considered at all for funding by the FTA, a project must meet a \$24.00 or less cost-per-hour user benefit. The high-end light rail just squeaks under this threshold at \$23.71 when calculated at \$1.6 billion, while both the Purple Line Jones Bridge Road alignment and the Corridor Cities Transitway bus rapid transit alternatives come in around \$18.00.

"This is exactly what the Town of Chevy Chase's consultants have said all along," noted Town of Chevy Chase Mayor Kathy Strom. "Our region needs to fight for transit that will give taxpayers the biggest bang for the buck -- and actually get built. The County study shows that for those who truly support mass transit, like the Town, the drive should be for bus rapid transit for the region."

Strom explained that is why the Town is pushing the State to reconsider its evaluation of the Jones Bridge Road Bus Rapid Transit alternative, the only alternative already under consideration that would help take some of the 4,000 new daily riders to Naval Medical Center off the road, still service Bethesda, and keep a valued community resource like the Capital Crescent Trail up and running safely for all users. "We believe if studied properly, this alignment would fare even better in the federal beauty contest," Mayor Strom added.

Maureen Jais-Mick, co-chair of Rethinking the Purple Line, a coalition of 18 community groups who favor transit solutions that spare the Trail, said the County study confirms that saving the Trail is cost-effective and that better transit solutions exist along other alignments.

"We question why certain groups have focused solely on one mode on one route -- expensive light rail on the Capital Crescent Trail -- rather than the best mode on the best route."

The Maryland Transit Administration will issue a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) in mid-September on all transit alternatives under consideration. Following public hearings, the State will select a "preferred alternative" to send forward for funding consideration by the Federal Transit Administration.

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Project	Mode	Capital Cost (2007 \$)	Est Avg Wkdy Riders In Plan Target Year	Cap Cost/ Wkdy Rider In Plan Target Year (Not a FTA Variable)	Cost Per Hour of Transportation User Benefit	Cap Cost Per Mile	Distance (Mi.)
FY 2009 New Start Annual Report Projects							
Pending Full Funding Agreements							
West Corridor LRT - Denver	LRT	\$656,800,000	29,700	\$88	\$23.82	\$54,280,992	12.1
University Link LRT Extension - Seattle	LRT	\$1,798,100,000	40,200	\$177	\$22.21	\$580,032,258	3.1
Projects In Preliminary Engineering							
Central Corridor LRT - St Paul / Minneapolis	LRT	\$932,000,000	43,300	\$85	\$24.84	\$84,727,273	11.0
Northeast Corridor LRT - Charlotte	LRT	\$749,000,000	10,500	\$283	\$25.35	\$70,000,000	10.7
Salt Lake City - Mid Jordan LRT	LRT	\$553,700,000	9,500	\$231	\$23.84	\$52,235,849	10.6
Central Subway - San Francisco	LRT	\$1,290,000,000	45,700	\$112	\$20.60	\$758,823,529	1.7
Boston Silver Line Phase III BRT	BRT	\$1,167,000,000	147,500	\$31	\$21.97	\$833,571,429	1.4
Projects In Final Design							
New Britan - Hartford Busway	BRT	\$459,000,000	15,200	\$120	\$22.07	\$48,829,787	9.4
Purple Line DEIS/AA Estimate - May 2008 Open Houses							
TSM		\$81,960,000					
Low Investment BRT	BRT	\$386,390,000	38,500	\$40	\$18.24	\$24,149,375	16
Medium Investment BRT	BRT	\$579,820,000	50,500	\$46	\$14.01	\$36,238,750	16
High Investment BRT	BRT	\$1,088,480,000	57,500	\$75	\$19.34	\$68,030,000	16
Low Investment LRT	LRT	\$1,206,150,000	58,500	\$82	\$26.51	\$75,384,375	16
Medium Investment LRT	LRT	\$1,220,150,000	61,500	\$79	\$22.82	\$76,259,375	16
High Investment LRT	LRT	\$1,634,840,000	66,500	\$98	\$23.71	\$102,177,500	16
Corridor Cities Transitway - 07/15/08 Full Team Meeting - EA/AA Numbers							
TSM		\$86,860,000	7,000	\$49			
Alternative 6A	LRT	\$770,530,000	30,000	\$102	\$32.90	\$57,076,296	13.5
Alternative 7A	LRT	\$770,530,000	30,000	\$102	\$32.43	\$57,076,296	13.5
Alternative 6B	BRT	\$449,920,000	26,000	\$69	\$18.50	\$33,327,407	13.5
Alternative 7B	BRT	\$449,920,000	27,000	\$66	\$18.25	\$33,327,407	13.5
FTA Cost Effectiveness Rating - FY 2009 Reporting Cycle							
High					\$11.99 or Less		
Medium High					\$12.00 - \$15.49		
Medium					\$15.50 - \$23.99		
Medium Low					\$24.00 - \$29.99		
Low					\$30.00 or Higher		
Note: Projects with cost-effectiveness ratings of Medium Low or Low will generally not be considered for funding by FTA							

Note: The information released by the Planning Department staff referenced in the press release is shown in its entirety in this spreadsheet. The ridership, cost, and cost effectiveness estimates for the Purple Line and the Corridor Cities Transitway were obtained from the Maryland Mass Transit Administration. The information for other projects was taken from the FY 2009 Annual Report On New Starts published by the Federal Transit Administration. No other written narrative, summary, or conclusion(s) accompanied the staff's distribution of the spreadsheet. It was provided for information and discussion purposes only.