




# City of Bowie

2614 Kenhill Drive  
Bowie, Maryland 20715

## MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council 

FROM: David J. Deutsch, City Manager

SUBJECT: US 301/MD 197 Interchange  
Project Planning Study

DATE: May 30, 2007

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On November 18, 2002 and January 6, 2003 the City Council held public hearings on proposed interchange designs for US 301/MD 197. Several alternatives were reviewed, including Alternative 2, Alternative 2 Modified, Alternative 5A and Alternative 5B. Both City staff and the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce recommended that Council support Alternative 5. At the conclusion of the hearing, the City Council decided to send a position statement to the State Highway Administration (SHA) expressing the City's concerns with the intensity of the four proposed design solutions.

Council further reviewed the interchange options for US 301/MD 197 approximately two (2) years ago, in March 2005. At that time, Project Manager Chris Weber of the Maryland State Highway Administration presented several alternates and discussed Council's concerns about the original project being too expansive and costly. Since 2005, SHA staff has been examining various aspects of the interchange design and have worked to refine the "Alternative 2 with Roundabouts" option, adding bridges at Governor Bridge Road and Excalibur Road.

In November 2006, SHA Administrator Neil Pedersen determined that the "Alternative 2 With Roundabouts" is the Preferred Alternative for the interchange design. All other options have been ruled out due to excessive cost or other complicating factors. On March 19, 2007 the current SHA Project Manager, Felicia Alexander, briefed Council on the status of the project. The two (2) alternatives retained are the No-Build Alternate (previously deemed unacceptable by Council) and "Alternative 2 With Roundabouts". At this point, SHA is considering the Roundabout option the only feasible candidate for future construction. SHA has been aggressively publicizing the remaining option with community associations and business groups. A Public Information Workshop was held at City Hall on May 9, 2007. Conclusion of the project planning stage would occur when the Administrator selects an alternative to forward to the Federal Highway Administration.

Council raised a number of concerns about the project at the March 19, 2007 briefing. These concerns included:

## US 301/MD 197 Interchange Proposal

- the need to minimize impact on individual properties;
- the need to accelerate the timeframe for construction;
- providing adequate access to and from Governor Bridge Road;
- minimizing impacts on retail businesses;
- addressing the potential for congestion in the weave areas, especially north of Governor Bridge Road;
- the need to avoid backups onto local streets and prevent speeding on C/D roads; and
- the need for an effective sign package.

The Roundabout option has many attractive attributes, including a much lower cost as well as the ability to meet access control objectives and be constructed in stages. At almost all locations, acceptable traffic levels-of-service will be maintained through the design year of 2030. Based on these factors, staff recommends the City Council support "Alternative 2 With Roundabouts" and request that SHA staff continue examining solutions to the issues identified at the March 19, 2007 briefing. It is further recommended that the attached position letter be sent to Administrator Pedersen.

Attachment



# City of Bowie

2614 Kenhill Drive  
Bowie, Maryland 20715

**DRAFT**

June 5, 2007

Mr. Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
707 North Calvert Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: US 301/MD 197 Interchange Design  
Alternative 2 With Roundabouts

Dear Administrator Pedersen:

On Monday, March 19, 2007 the Bowie City Council received a briefing from your staff on the Preferred Alternative for the US 301/MD 197 interchange known as "Alternative 2 With Roundabouts". The March 19th meeting was the latest of several City Council meetings devoted to the proposed interchange design. Since as early as 2003, the City Council has urged your agency to consider options to the alternatives presented at the November 2002 Location/Design Public Hearing. The City Council also concluded that the "No Build" option is not realistic. Following worksessions held during 2004 and 2005, the City Council sent a letter to then-Project Manager Christopher Weber encouraging the further development of the "Alternative 2 With Roundabouts" option.

The City Council conducted a public hearing on "Alternative 2 With Roundabouts" on June 4, 2007. It is the City Council's understanding that, as preliminary engineering plans have evolved for the interchange, the "Alternative #2 With Roundabouts" option is the only viable option remaining. This option has many attractive attributes, including a much lower cost as well as the ability to meet access control objectives and be constructed in stages. At almost all locations, acceptable traffic levels-of-service will be maintained through the design year of 2030. Based on these factors, the City Council supports "Alternate 2 With Roundabouts" and encourages you to place this project on a fast track to complete project planning and subsequently to move it into design and construction. We also ask that you work to address all of the City Council concerns provided at the March 19th project briefing as the project moves forward.

The City greatly appreciates the outreach and consideration your planning staff has provided us during the years of project development. We look forward to continuing this positive relationship into the next steps ahead.

Sincerely,

Bowie City Council  
G. Frederick Robinson  
Mayor

Letter to Neil J. Pedersen re: US 301/MD 197

Enclosures

cc:    **The Honorable Douglas J.J. Peters, State Senator**  
      **The Honorable James Hubbard, State Delegate**  
      **The Honorable Marvin Holmes, State Delegate**  
      **The Honorable Gerron Levi, State Delegate**  
      **Ms. Felicia Alexander, SHA Project Manager**  
      **Mr. Darrell Mobley, SHA District 3 Engineer**

### Current Schedule

Informational Workshop May 9, 2007  
Locator/Design Approval December 2007

### About the Study

The US 301/MD 197 Transportation Study is the first "breakout" project of the US 301 Northern Corridor Transportation/Access Management Study, as part of the "tiered" National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The rationale for the tiered approach is discussed in detail in the US 301 Study, Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Northern Corridor. As documented in the 1996 US 301 Task Force Final Report, the existing conditions and expected growth within this corridor will significantly increase traffic congestion and vehicle crashes. The purpose of the US 301/MD 197 Transportation Study is to develop solutions that will address congestion, increase mobility, and improve safety conditions along this stretch of roadway.



Maryland Department of Transportation  
STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
Project Planning Division  
Mail Stop C-301  
P.O. Box 717  
Baltimore, MD 21202

### Continuing Public Involvement

SHA is committed to keeping the public involved throughout the US 301/MD 197 Transportation Study and welcomes all questions and comments. For more information or to be included on the project mailing list, please contact:

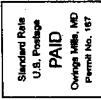
Ms. Felicia Alexander, Project Manager  
410-545-8511 or 1-800-548-5026  
email: falexander@sha.state.md.us

or

Ms. Theresa Christian,  
Environmental Manager  
410-545-8697 or 1-800-548-5026  
email: tchristian@sha.state.md.us

In addition, an overview of this and other SHA projects, including upcoming activities, can be found on the SHA website at [www.marylandroads.com](http://www.marylandroads.com). Simply click on "Projects and Events" to locate the Project Planning webpages.

THANK YOU!

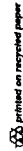


Martin O'Malley  
Governor

Anthony G. Brown  
Lt. Governor

John D. Porcari  
Secretary

Neil J. Pedersen  
Administrator



## US 301/MD 197 Transportation Study

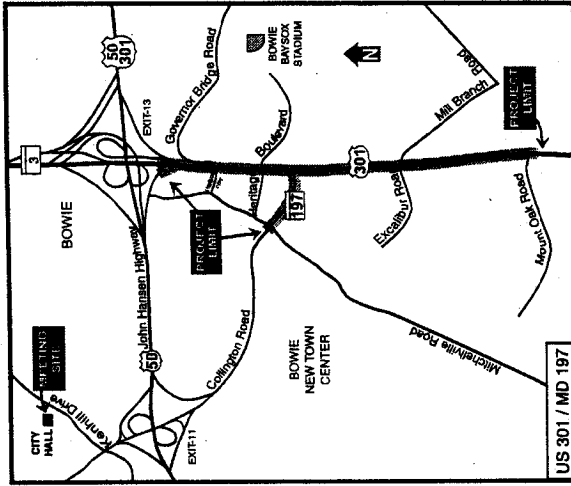
North of Mt. Oak Road to US 50



INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2007

### Preferred Alternative Identified

The US 301/MD 197 Transportation Study has passed an important milestone, with the selection of a Preferred Alternative. Following the 2002 Public Hearing, the project team was asked to design a more cost-effective alternative that could be constructed in phases. In response, the team has redesigned Alternative 2 Modified and now has an alternative that is constructible in four phases, arranged in a series that incrementally provides the traffic relief needed in the project area. The new alternative also has significantly fewer impacts than previous designs. A detailed description and map of Alternative 2 with Roundabouts is presented inside this newsletter. Additional details will also be available at a public meeting scheduled for May 9, 2007. Please plan to attend.



### New Design Reduces Impacts

The previous alternatives under consideration required up to 64 acres of property from private owners, whereas Alternative 2 with Roundabouts decreases this impact to 54 acres of right-of-way. One business displacement is anticipated, compared to two or four displacements with the previous alternatives.

The impacts to natural environmental features along the corridor also have been reduced:

- Wetland impacts reduced by 0.17 acres
- Stream impacts reduced by 117 linear feet
- Forest impacts reduced by 4.55 acres

### Informational Workshop — May 9, 2007

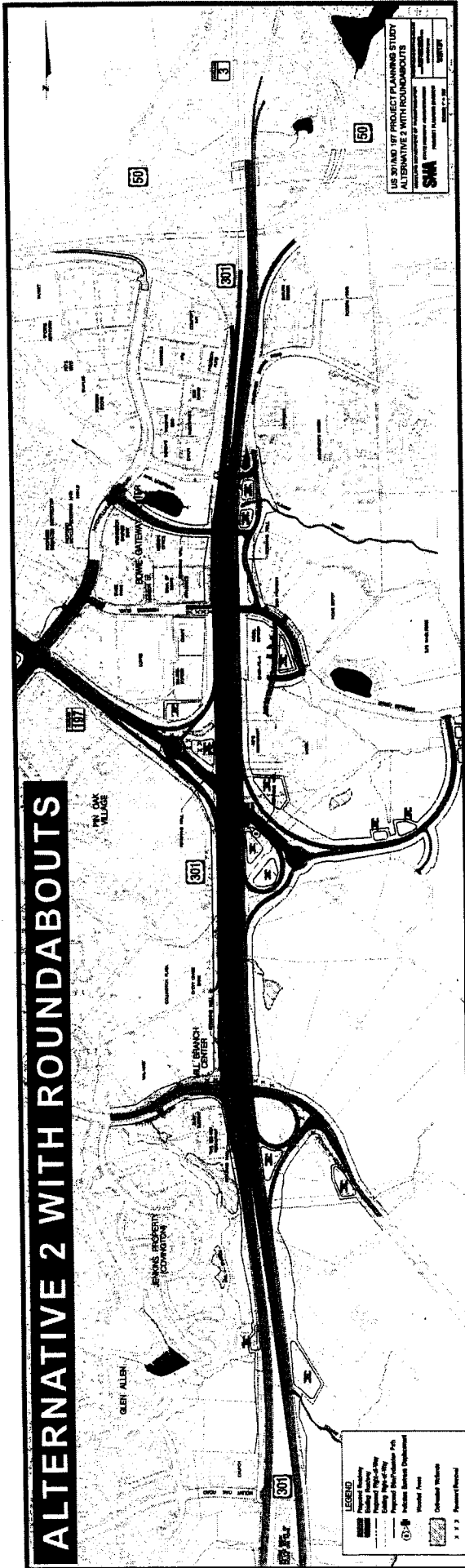
**WHAT:** Informational Workshop providing details about the SHA Preferred Alternative. Staff will be available to answer your questions. Workshop will be conducted in an open house format.

No formal presentation will be held.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, May 9, 2007  
5 pm – 8 pm

**WHERE:** Bowie City Hall  
Multipurpose Room  
2416 Kenhill Drive  
Bowie, MD 20715

# ALTERNATIVE 2 WITH ROUNDABOUTS



## Alternative 2 with Roundabouts - A Closer Look

Under this alternative, US 301 would be expanded from two lanes to three lanes in each direction along the existing alignment, with a bridge carrying MD 197 over US 301 to eliminate the existing at-grade intersection. This alternative utilizes a traditional diamond interchange at MD 197, with two double-lane roundabouts at the ends of the directional ramps providing access to the parallel collector-distributor (CD) roadways. Approximately 1.5 miles of a one-way CD road would be constructed on each side of US 301 from just north of Mt. Oak Road to just south of the US 50 interchange.

At the north end of the project, an overpass would connect the Relocated Harbour Way on the west side of US 301 to Governor Bridge Road, which would be extended southward to function as a service road.

Similarly, at the south end of the project, an overpass would connect Excalibur Road to Mill Branch Road. Access to the Collington Plaza will still be available on the southbound CD road between MD 197 and Mill Branch Road.

The intersection of MD 197 and Mitchellville Road would also be improved with additional through lanes and turn lanes. US 301 would be converted to a fully-access-controlled roadway between Mt. Oak Road and US 50.

Alternative 2 with Roundabouts would require the relocation of one business, and access to the remaining businesses would be maintained via the CD roadways.

## Key Features Improve Travel and Implementation

**Improved Operations on Mainline US 301:** This alternative involves removing four traffic signals (Harbour Way, Heritage Boulevard, MD 197, and Excalibur Road) on US 301. US 301 would be converted to a fully-access-controlled roadway between Mt. Oak Road and US 50 with three through lanes in each direction.

**Separation of Local and Through Trips:** To maintain access to and from adjacent commercial and residential properties, parallel CD roads are proposed and would connect to US 301.

**MD 197 Widening:** MD 197 would be widened from west of Mitchellville Road to the new east-side service road. Additional lanes would also be added at the intersection of MD 197 with Mitchellville Road. This roadway would bridge over US 301 with two double-lane roundabouts to improve traffic flow.

**Phasing:** The alternative has been split into four phases to make it more cost-effective:

- Phase 1:** Includes the overpass of Relocated Harbour Way, improvements at Mitchellville Road to Heritage Boulevard, and the connection of Governor Bridge Road and Ballpark Road.
- Phase 2:** Includes the interchange improvements for MD 197 at US 301, intersection improvements at Mitchellville Road, and a portion of the CD roadway system.
- Phase 3:** Includes the interchange improvements for Excalibur/Mill Brand Road over US 301 and a portion of the CD roadway system.
- Phase 4:** Will include widening of US 301 mainline improvements and completion of the CD roadway system.