



# City of Bowie

2614 Kenhill Drive  
Bowie, Maryland 20715

## MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch, City Manager

SUBJECT: Maryland Route 197  
Alternative 4 - Modified with Sidewalks and Street Trees  
Draft City Council Position Statement  
(Old Business)

DATE: April 14, 2009

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On April 6, 2009 City Council held a public hearing regarding the project planning study alternatives for MD 197. The project involves the segment of roadway between Kenhill Drive and Relocated MD 450. At the conclusion of the public hearing, Council voted to support the latest version of the plan, "Alternative 4 - Modified with Sidewalks and Street Trees", with numerous comments and recommendations. Staff prepared the attached draft, which incorporates the comments made by City Councilmembers.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the attached draft letter to the State Highway Administration's Project Manager regarding MD 197.

Attachment - Proposed Draft Letter to Maryland State Highway Administration

## DRAFT #2

April 21, 2009

Ms. Suseela Rajan, Project Manager  
Project Planning Division  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
707 North Calvert Street, Mail Stop C-301  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

RE: MD 197 Project Planning Study Recommendations

Dear Ms. Rajan:

On Monday, April 6, 2009 the Bowie City Council conducted a public hearing on proposed "Alternative 4 Modified - Sidewalks and Street Trees", which is among the alternatives now under consideration for MD 197. The project planning study involves upgrading the segment of MD 197 between Kenhill Drive/London Lane and Relocated MD 450. After conducting a public hearing and listening to the testimony of numerous residents, the City Council unanimously voted to support Alternative 4 Modified, with several specific recommendations, noted below.

The City Council's goal for this project planning study is that a safe and efficient roadway design will be created that minimizes the construction footprint as well as any impacts on adjacent properties. The City greatly appreciates the sensitivity the Maryland State Highway Administration has shown regarding possible impacts of the future roadway improvement on residents of our community. We are especially grateful for your willingness to work further to explore additional solutions to the issues raised at the Location/Design Public Hearing.

The City Council concurs that Alternative 4 Modified is superior to the original Alternative 4 in terms of its amenities and reduced footprint, and we note that the revised design addresses many of the City's previously identified issues. The City Council SUPPORTS "Alternative 4 - Modified with Sidewalks and Street Trees" because this option will provide acceptable traffic levels of service and will result in a safer roadway. However, the Council provides the following comments to clearly highlight our remaining issues and concerns for the next stage:

1. SHA shall use every opportunity available to minimize both the "footprint" of the future roadway and the amount of disturbance by using 2:1 slopes in grading and retaining walls wherever possible. Every option should be used to avoid impacting the adjacent residents' property **including possible future consideration of removal of the western 5-foot wide sidewalk, 8-foot wide tree lines and/or reduction of 16-foot wide compatible bike lanes (see # 2 below).**

Letter to Ms. Suseela Rajan  
re: MD 197 Project Planning Study

2. The proposed 16-foot wide bicycle compatible lanes shall be reduced to standard size (e.g. 11-foot wide) lanes. **Please be advised that the City intends to request a waiver of the 16-foot wide bicycle compatible lane requirement at the design/engineering stage.**
3. At locations where the noise barrier is not installed, SHA shall create (or recreate) a vegetative buffer within the 25-foot landscape easement on lots containing the easement and establish a similar vegetative buffer on properties that do not have a landscape easement. To maintain a degree of screening and noise attenuation, any existing stockade fencing removed due to construction shall be replaced in kind. The City Council wants noise barriers erected for those areas eligible for them and insists that the noise walls be attractive in appearance and consistent in design.
4. Left-turns shall be prohibited at the Tongue Avenue intersection. The Tongue Avenue intersection shall be closed with a median and a new U-turn bay provided at the Tasker Middle School driveway median break for northbound traffic intending to access Tongue Avenue. U-turns shall be allowed at the London Lane/Kenhill Drive intersection to accommodate motorists exiting Tongue Avenue who intend to travel north.
5. Dedicated right-turn lanes shall be provided on MD 197 at the Foxhill Park/Lerner Place and Faith Lane/Lyle Lane intersections and Tongue Avenue. The feasibility of adding dedicated deceleration lanes shall be investigated at the time of detailed design.
6. Pedestrian activated crossing signals shall be retained at the Long Ridge Lane/Tulip Grove Drive and London Lane/Kenhill Drive intersections.
7. The project design shall attempt to address the demand for pedestrians to cross MD 197 in the vicinity of Foxhill Park. The concept of mid-block crosswalks or other pedestrian friendly designs shall be explored at Lyle Lane/Faith Lane and Lerner Place/Foxhill Park (including a pedestrian-activated traffic signal at the latter) during the detailed design stage.
8. The existing hiker-biker trail alignment shall be used wherever possible in the future trail design.
9. Existing utility lines adjacent to MD 197 shall be placed underground wherever possible.
10. To address the current problem of speeding vehicles, techniques such as traffic calming, speed enforcement cameras and sequencing of traffic signals shall be implemented as soon as possible.
11. A fence shall be provided for safety and security along the MD 197 frontage adjacent to the Foxhill Park playground, picnic area and tennis courts.

Letter to Ms. Suseela Rajan  
re: MD 197 Project Planning Study

Based on the consensus represented by this letter, the City looks forward to a quick conclusion of the Project Planning Study. We are anxious to work with SHA in the near future on the design and engineering phase of this important project. Again, thank you for all of your efforts to involve the City and our community in your planning process.

Sincerely,

Bowie City Council  
G. Frederick Robinson  
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Douglas J.J. Peters  
The Honorable James W. Hubbard  
The Honorable Marvin E. Holmes  
The Honorable Gerron Levi  
The Honorable Ingrid M. Turner  
The Honorable Samuel H. Dean  
Mr. Neil Pedersen, SHA Administrator  
Mr. Gregory Slater, Director of SHA OPPE  
Mr. Darrell Mobley, SHA District 3 Engineer