

From: [Douglas Smith](#)
To: [Mayor and Council](#)
Cc: [Tanisha Briley](#); [Brian Fields](#)
Subject: MD 124 at MD 355 Discussion
Date: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 1:03:00 PM
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Good Afternoon Mayor and Council Members,

Last week, Brian and I met with Council Member McNulty to discuss upcoming developments and transportation projects impacting the intersection of MD 355 (Frederick Rd) and MD 124 (Montgomery Village Ave). We'd recently attended SHA's open house for the MD 124 PSAP (Pedestrian Safety Action Plan) project, which will make various safety improvements along MD 124 from its intersection with MD 355 to the intersection of Midcounty Hwy and Woodfield Rd/Saybrooke Oaks Blvd. Numerous attendees, mostly residents of Montgomery Village, expressed concerns regarding capacity reductions related to the safety improvements, particularly given the redevelopment of the former Lakeforest Mall site.

Following this meeting, City staff requested and reviewed the traffic study performed as part of the MD 124 PSAP project and found that this study used only existing 2023 traffic volumes rather than adding the new trips for numerous nearby proposed developments. City staff created a basic simulation model of the intersections of MD 124 with MD 355 and Russell Ave in order to consider the impacts with development traffic.

The City's analysis found that the planned developments surrounding this area will cause these intersections to exceed capacity, creating long vehicle delays and queues. Of the new development traffic, the mall site is contributing roughly half, with Gateway Lakeforest making up another 5-10% depending on time of day. While the mall redevelopment Traffic Impact Study had identified one widening project at the intersection of MD 124 and MD 355 in order to mitigate their impacts, SHA ultimately declined this mitigation based on their upcoming PSAP project.

The PSAP project's proposed changes result in marginal decreases in capacity and are not primarily responsible for the delay impacts, but will still contribute to some degree. Many attendees of the PSAP open house provided negative feedback on the project.

City Staff have identified two lower-cost changes that could help to reduce these impacts: providing a second southbound left-turn lane from MD 124 onto Russell Ave (requires minimal widening), and converting one of the northbound thru lanes of MD 124 at MD 355 into a left-turn lane (requires widening the receiving leg of northbound MD 355, as originally proposed by the Lakeforest Mall developer). **City Staff are preparing a request for SHA to revise their PSAP study to reflect development traffic volumes and to consider the City's recommended improvements or other reasonable mitigations. This request is expected to be submitted to SHA by June 16.**

Council Member McNulty had previously raised the possibility of a future grade separation of the MD 355 intersection. Staff sketched two rough concepts for trenching MD 124 under MD 355 and found that it could be feasible, albeit much more expensive than most other transportation projects in the corridor. Northbound MD 124 would likely also bypass Russell Ave before returning to the surface. The volumes at the MD 355 intersection are comparable to other standalone locations where SHA has performed grade separation, such as MD 355 at Josiah Henson Pkwy and MD 97 at Randolph Rd. Grade separation would allow significant reduction of surface-level pavement area, with the future potential for additional capping of MD 124, and would create a much more pedestrian-friendly environment, rather than continuing to widen the intersection with diminishing returns for capacity.

Best regards,
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