Cost Effective and Sustainable Alternatives to Proposed BRT ITA

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIVIC FEDERATION, INC.
SEPTEMBER 21, 2015

Topics

- BRT/ITA Background
- Budgetary/Tax Impacts
- Alternatives

The key policy questions

- WHAT ARE THE COSTS?
- WHO BENEFITS?
- WHO PAYS?
- WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

BRT/ITA Background

Transportation Alternatives

- Privately owned vehicles
- Rentals, car-sharing services, carpooling
- Taxicabs
- Mass transit
- Bikes and other human powered vehicles
- Hitchhiking, slugging
- Walking
- Telecommuniting

Mass Transit Alternatives

- Heavy rail – Metrorail
- Light rail - Purple Line
- Streetcar/Trolley – DC H Street Streetcar Line
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – WMATA Crystal City Metroway
- Enhanced Express Bus – WMATA K9 Line on New Hampshire Ave.

Transit Project Considerations

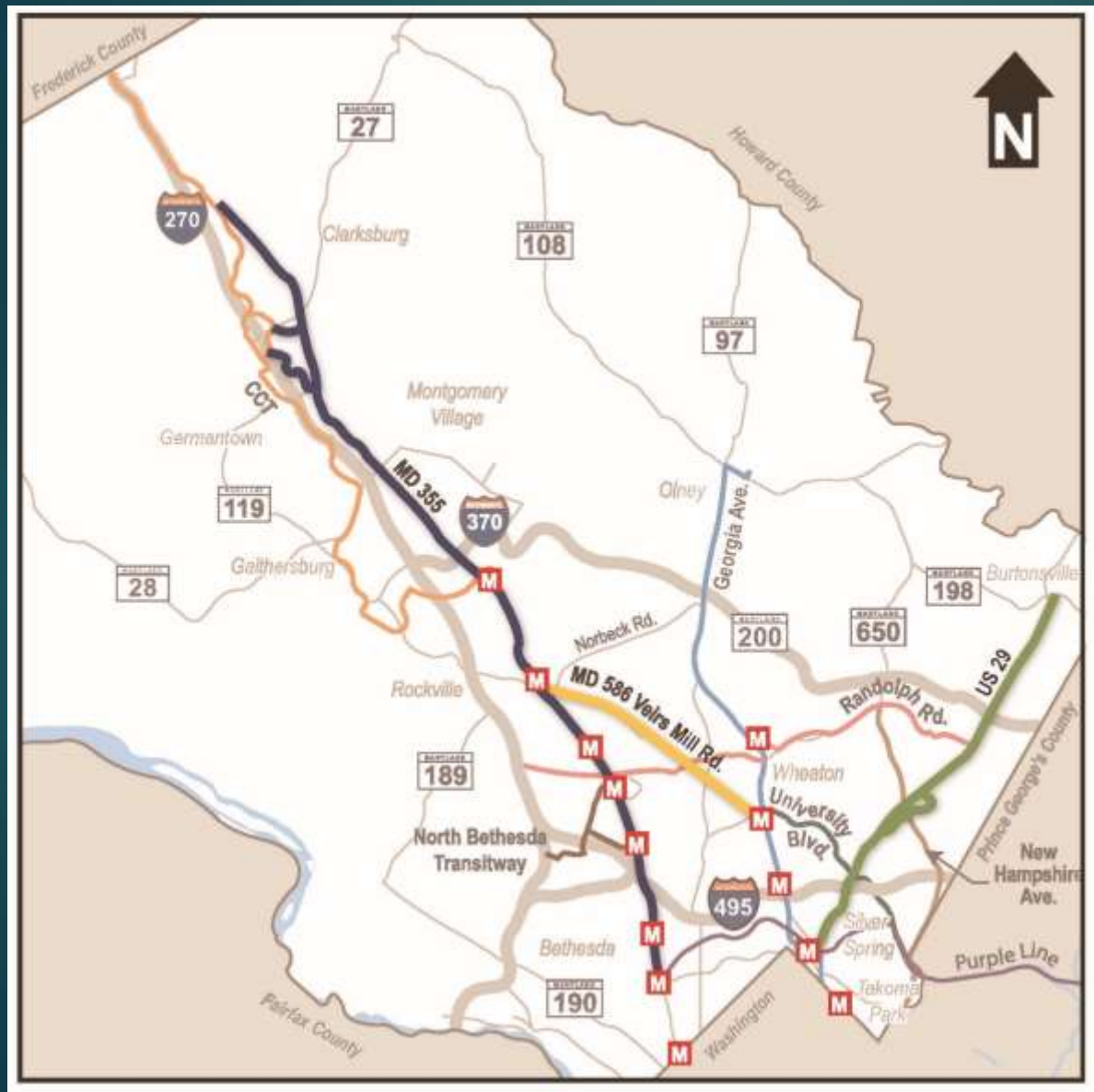
Requires balancing three concerns

- Cost
- Service capacity
- Service demand/determinants
  - Frequency
  - Access and convenience
  - Overall trip/travel times

BRT Projects Under Study

- Currently Studied Projects
  - Route 355/Rockville Pike, Phase 1 – 14.13 miles
  - Veirs Mill Road – 6.16 miles
  - Route 29/Colesville Road – 11.02 miles
  - Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), Phase 1 – 9.10 miles
- Future Projects
  - Route 355 & CCT Phase 2 extensions
  - Phase 2 – Purchase of 65 more BRT vehicles
  - 5 more BRT Routes

Planned BRT and Other Transit Routes



BRT Planning Studies

- MD 355
- US 29
- MD 586 Veirs Mill Rd.

Currently in Design

- CCT
- Purple Line

Other Master Planned Corridors

- Georgia Ave.
- Randolph Rd.
- North Bethesda Transitway
- University Blvd.
- New Hampshire Ave.

BRT Phase 1 Estimated Costs/Timeline Chart

Corridor	Construction Period (FY)	Capital Cost		Maintenance Facility		Total		Operations and Maintenance	
		2015 ($MM)	YOE ($MM)	Allocated Capital Cost ($MM)	YOE ($MM)	2015 ($MM)	YOE ($MM)	Initial Year	Initial Cost ($MM)
CCT	2016-2020	$634.5	$653.5			$634.5	$653.5	2021	$14.1
Veirs Mill Road	2016-2022	$276.3	$284.5	$13.7	$14.6	$290.0	$299.1	2023	$10.3
US 29	2016-2023	$200.0	$205.9	$9.9	$10.6	$209.9	$216.5	2024	$19.2
355 North	2017-2026	$619.6	$638.2	$30.8	$32.7	$650.4	$670.9	2027	$25.4
355 South	2016-2024	$422.8	$435.5	$21.0	$22.3	$443.8	$457.8	2025	$23.9
Total	2016-2026	$2,153.1	$2,217.7	$75.6	$80.2	$2,228.7	$2,297.9		

Note: CCT costs include maintenance facility expenses.

YOE – year of expense

Proposed Independent Transit Authority

- *Specific details will be determined by state enabling legislation and subsequent County laws*
- Board appointed by County Executive
- Control BRT and Ride On planning and operations
- CIP, operating, and operating budgets approved by Council
- Can sell bonds, condemn property, and enter into agreements with governments and corporations
- Proposed caps for possible property (7%), excise ($0.30 per sq. ft., and local sales ($0.05) taxes
- Ride On staff remain County employees; status of BRT-related staff TBD

Institute for Transportation and Development Policy

As a practical matter of public administration, however, Montgomery County has limited experience with managing projects of this scope, scale, and complexity. Developing even one BRT corridor will be an administrative challenge in Montgomery County, let alone an attempt to develop and deliver multiple corridors simultaneously; a task no other municipality has ever attempted.

- excerpted from ITDP's report, *Demand and Service Planning Report to Montgomery County DOT,* page 5

Institute for Transportation and Development Policy

BRT system design decisions and phasing must start from the basis of existing bus ridership even if land use changes over time are also considered. This is critical, as that base of ridership will continue to make up the majority of the ridership for many years after system opening. A BRT system that opens with no riders will be viewed as a failure, even if transit-oriented development occurs and the ridership grows over the years. Put another way, if a lane is taken away from traffic and dedicated to BRT, in a "corridor of transformation," that lane will either remain empty until ridership materializes – something that will be distasteful to the car drivers who have lost their lane – or will be full of empty buses – something that will have significant cost ramifications to the system.
- excerpted from 6/29/2012 ITDP Memo to County Executive and other County officials

County Wide Transit Corridors Master Plan

Since a large part of the initial ridership for BRT service will come from existing transit users whose numbers do not warrant a high level of treatment at this time, it is likely that there will be an incremental introduction of priority treatments and features that, with actual operating and ridership experience, ultimately lead to the maximum level of treatment appropriate for the specific corridor in question.

- excerpted from County Wide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, page 15

Budgetary/Tax Impacts

BRT Capital and Operating Costs

- Estimated Capital Costs Phase 1
  - Currently Studied Projects
    - $2.3 billion
  - Future Projects
    - $3.3 billion
- Estimated Annual Operating Costs Phase 1
  - Currently Studied Projects
    - $93 million
  - Future Projects
    - $125.4 million

Budget Impacts of Borrowing

- Every $10 million borrowed adds $1 million in debt service to operating budget

Every $1 million generated/saved could also be used for:
13 public school teachers
9 police officers
9 fire fighters
Operating 1 library
Operating 5 recreation centers
Rental assistance for 427 families
31,250 bednights in family shelters
Respite care for 339 clients
Child care subsidies for 197 children for a year
Services for 4,124 Montgomery Cares clients
1,274 county-funded Maternity Partnership program
1,919 Housing Stabilization grants
Pruning 2,150 trees

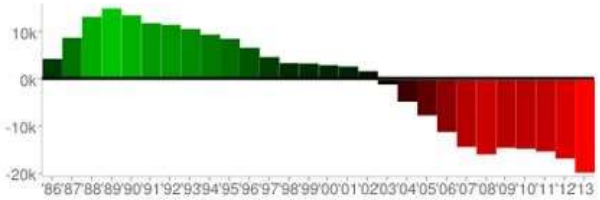
- Debt service is third highest expense in operating budget – $367.6 million or 7.2%)

Impacts on County Taxpayers

- Current BRT Projects – Capital and Operating Costs
  - For average $440,000 assessed value home - $381 more per year for 30+ years
  - $87 for every $100,000 in assessed valuation
- Future BRT Projects – Capital and Operating Costs
  - Similar increases
- County Executive warns of 10+% property tax increase next year to maintain current spending levels.

Despite Population Growth, Montgomery County Continues to Lose Taxpayers

Montgomery County (MD)
Lost 20,715 people
Population Migration 1985-2013

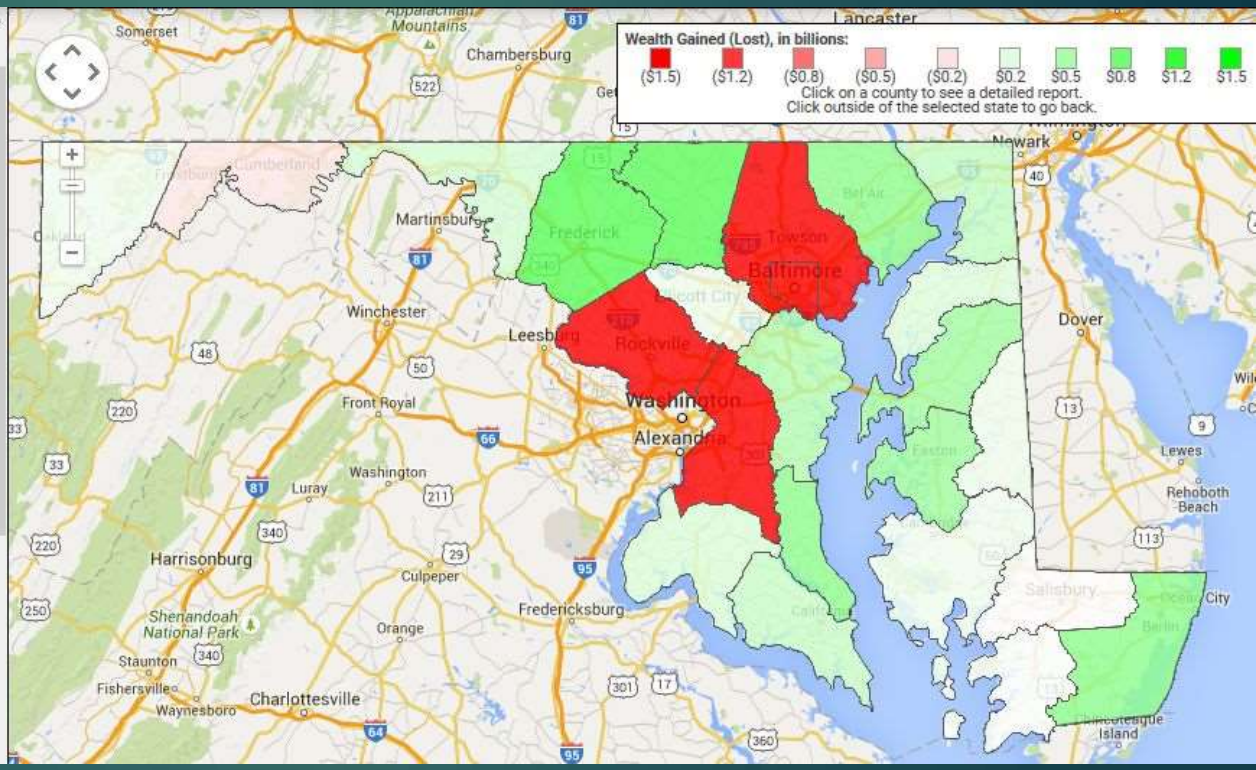


Gained Population From:

26,234	District Of Columbia, DC
8,132	Prince George's County, MD
1,808	Queens County, NY
1,682	Allegheny County, PA
1,554	Nassau County, NY

Lost Population To:

28,498	Frederick County, MD
10,969	Howard County, MD
6,727	Fairfax County, VA
6,488	Anne Arundel County, MD
4,147	Loudoun County, VA



Data Sources: How Money Walks, www.howmoneywalks.com; using 2012 IRS data

Mega-Transit Projects – Too Expensive and Too Late

Friday, January 31, 2014

Fresno City Council Slams the Brakes on BRT

by Angie Schmitt

The Washington Post

Transportation

D.C. officials radically scale back streetcar plans

CBC news | British Columbia

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Transit referendum: Voters say No to new Metro Vancouver tax, transit improvements

Without new funding, transit services to be cut across region, Mayor Gregor Robertson says

Chicago Sun-Times

Ashland BRT seems all but dead with return of Ashland, Western express buses

chicago.suntimes.com /news/7/71/887130/express-buses-return-ashland-western-ashland-brt-dead

Written By Fran Spielman Posted: 08/18/2015, 09:54am

The CTA's $160 million plan to build 16 miles of dedicated bus rapid transit lanes down the center of Ashland Avenue was shoved to the back of the bus Tuesday in favor of a $30 million plan to use express buses and "smart" traffic signals to speed travel times on Ashland and Western.

During his re-election campaign, Mayor Rahm Emanuel backed away from the Ashland BRT after vanquished challenger Jesus "Chuy" Garcia sided with local residents, businesses and

The Washington Post

Arlington officials halt efforts on streetcars for Columbia Pike, Crystal City

washingtonpost.com /local/virginia-politics/arlington-officials-major-announcement-on-columbia-pike-streetcar-project-at-noon/2014/11/15/ce2a8170-6f38-11e4-8808-afaa1e3a33ef_story.html

Nashville MTA: Amp is dead

Joey Garrison, jgarrison@tennessean.com 6:12 p.m. CST January 22, 2015

f 1166 CONNECT | 59 TWEET | in 2 LINKEDIN | 16 COMMENT | EMAIL | MORE

The Amp, Nashville's controversial bus rapid transit proposal, appears dead once and for all after Mayor Karl Dean's top transit official said Thursday that the city plans to cease work on the project.

Tuesday, June 24, 2014

No Central Loop BRT in 2014 as CDOT Delays Launch Indefinitely

by Steven Vance

Alternatives

Can Anything Else Be Done?

Can Anything Else Be Done?

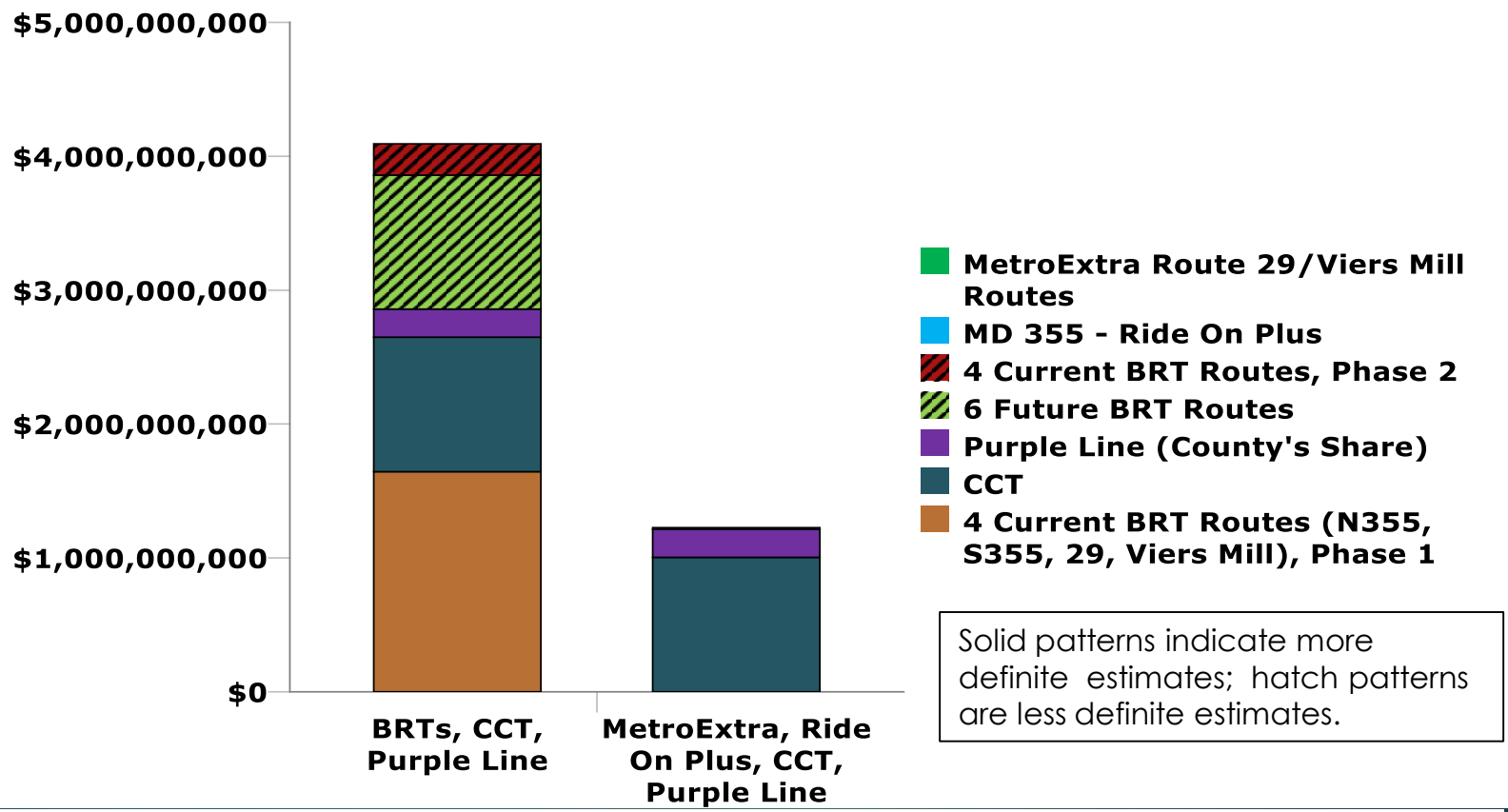
Yes, there are alternatives that are:

- More affordable
- More immediate
- More appropriate to the County's needs

Examples of Alternatives

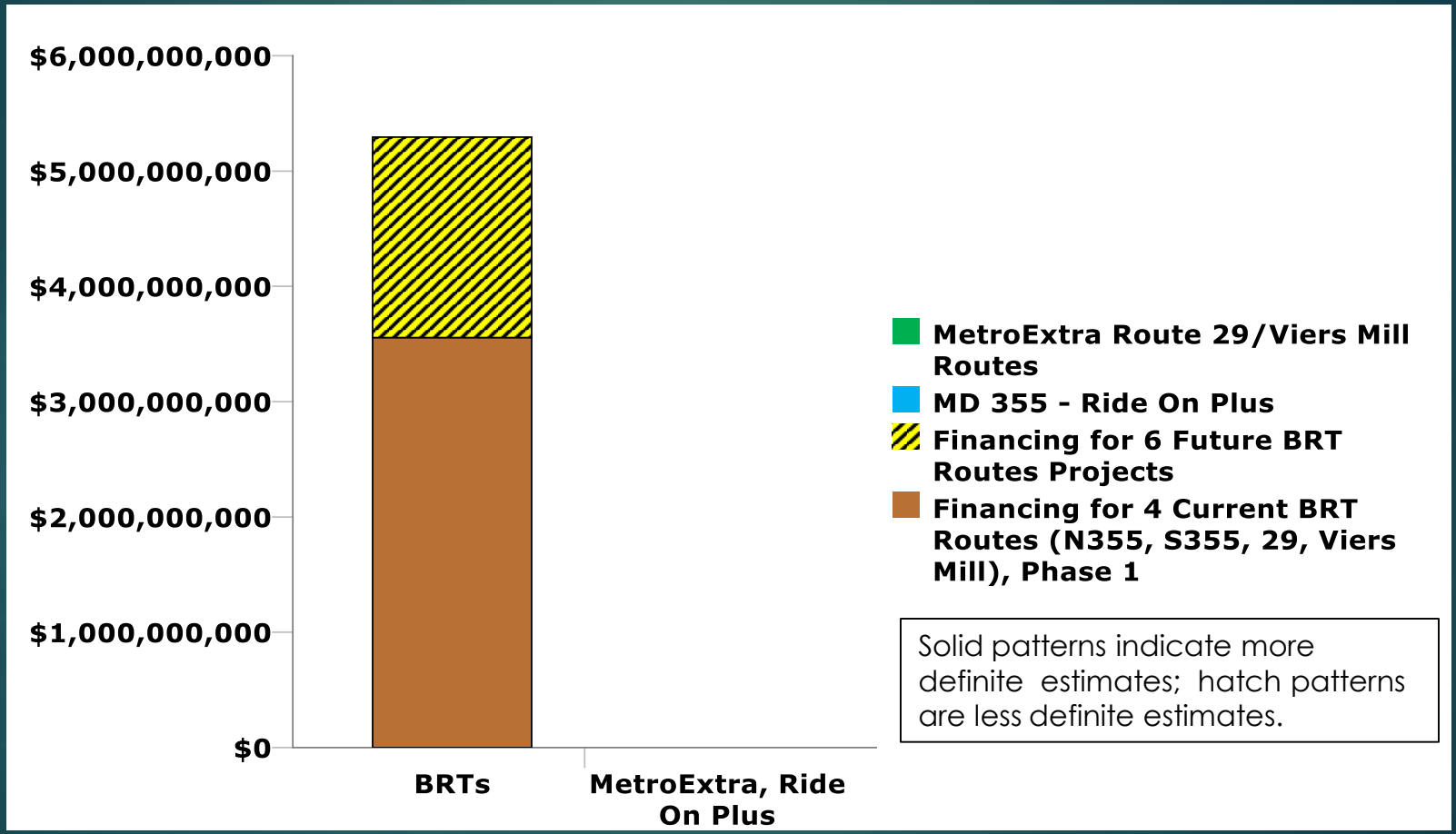
- Enhanced express bus service
- Data driven improvements in existing transit resources
- Explore potential for on-demand bus and car sharing services to supplement mass transit
- Implement real time computer traffic signal controls
- Implement positive congestion pricing
- Provide free transit fares

Capital Cost Comparison for Transit Alternatives

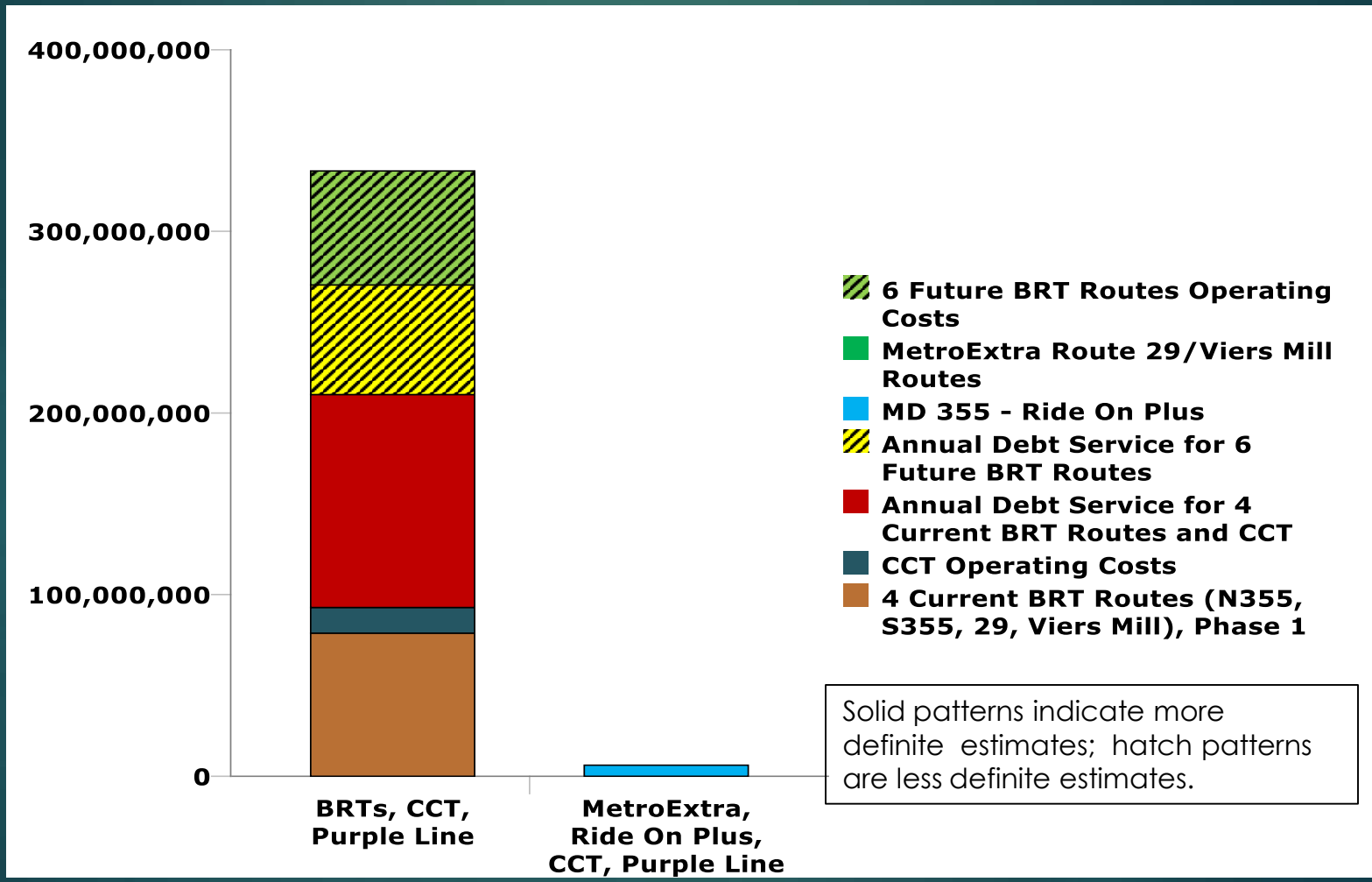


- The CCT capital estimate is from the WCOG 2015 CLRP Amendents, Sept. 16, 2015
- The 4 current BRTs estimated capital costs are very preliminary since they were provided well before any detailed engineering/design. They do not include certain costs related to road reconstruction and land acquisition; any relocation of underground utilities and streetlights; any new pedestrian and bike facilities; any centralized traffic control center facilities or escalation costs; and maintenance facility expansion if additional buses are purchased.

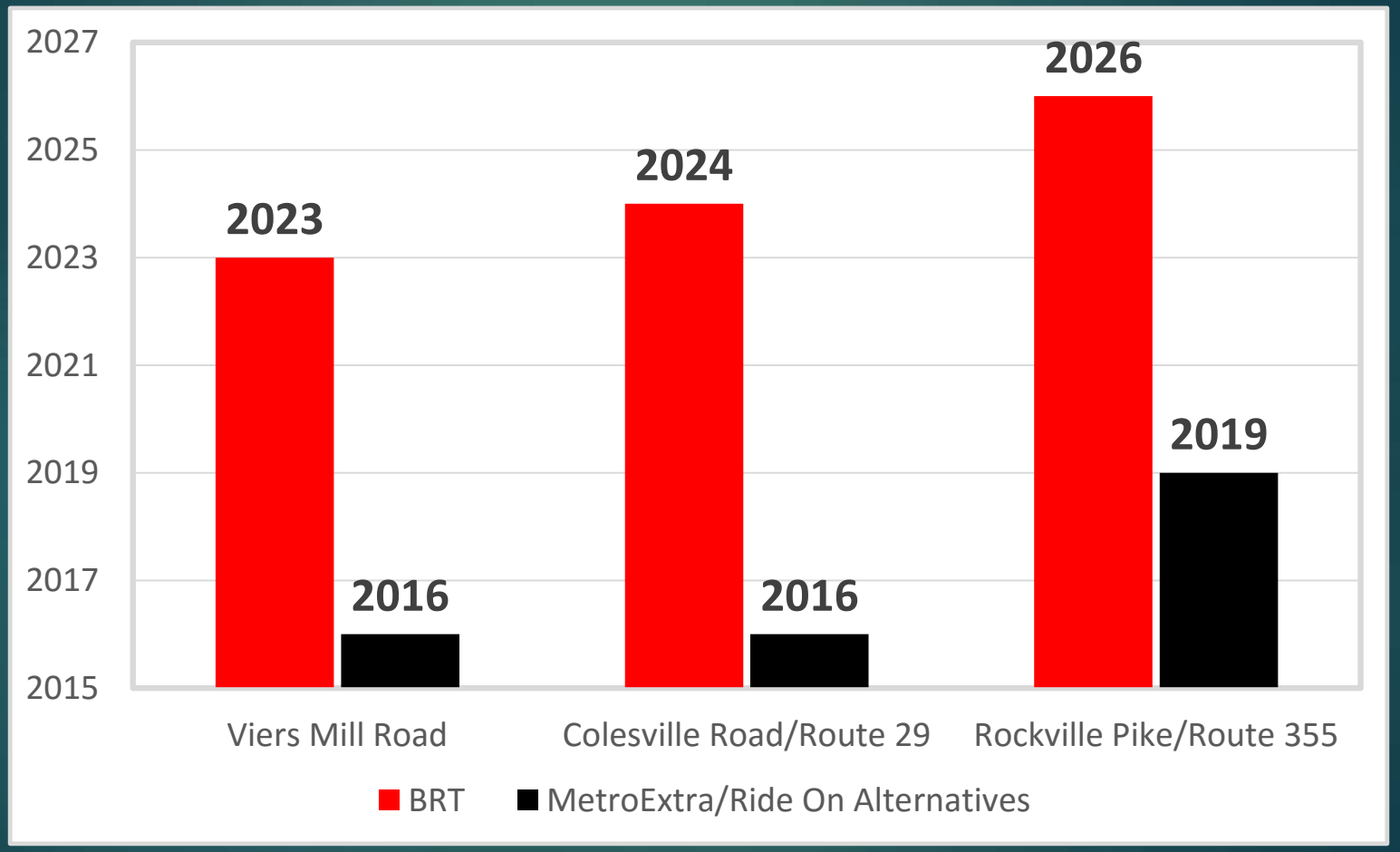
Financing Cost Comparison for Transit Alternatives



Operating Cost Comparison for Transit Alternatives



Comparison of Implementation Times



The ***Reimagining Transit*** Approach

A data driven approach to more efficiently and effectively use existing transit resources to serve the maximum ridership.

Houston, TX – Benefits

- 15 minute frequency including weekends
- 90% of routes have 10 to 20 shorter travel times
- 93% of riders use same stops; 99% of riders within ¼ mile of a stop
- drivers allowed to deviate from routes for on-demand pickups and dropoffs

Houston, TX – Costs

- $0 with reallocation of 25% of existing resources

Being adopted by Omaha, NE; Los Angeles, CA; and other communities

Other Ways to Increase Bus Use

- Eliminate fares on Ride On buses. Cost of this would be less than fare recovery since buses will have less time at stops.
- Fare recovery FY 2014 Actual $21,655,986
- Fiscal Year 2015 Approved $23,638,593 Projection for FY 2020 $25,959,707
- MetroExtra/Ride On Plus enhanced buses provide limited stop express service in high demand areas at relatively low cost and can be improved through advanced traffic signal control systems

New Technology Impacts on Transportation that Are Occurring Now and in the Next Ten Years

- Uber, Lyft, Bridj and other on demand services.
- Driverless vehicles.
- Ride sharing applications.
- Smart phone applications including WAZE, Google Maps – Includes Vehicle, Metro and Bus estimated times for trips.
- Zipcars and other short term rentals at Metro Stations and other convenient locations.