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The Action Committee for Transit is an advocacy group dedicated to better communities through improved public transit in Montgomery County, Maryland. ACT believes that the goal of transportation is to move people, not cars. That is why ACT supports the permanent removal of Mid-County Highway Extended (M83) from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, as well as all other aspects of current and future Montgomery County plans, programs, and project development.

Even according to MCDOT's own study in February 2017, M83 is the worst option for mobility, the environment, and traffic in the M83 study area. M83 would increase driving and vehicle miles traveled, reduce transit mode share, and increase car travel time. Only transit expansion, such as BRT on 355 that runs in its own lane, and all-day, two-way, seven-day, frequent MARC service, will allow Montgomery County to meet its housing and land use goals with transit-oriented development.

Improving public transit is also highly important for equity and accessibility. Currently, too many people in the upcounty do not have adequate access to frequent, reliable transit connections. This gap places an added burden on people who cannot afford a vehicle or cannot drive, including many young people, elderly people, and people with disabilities. It limits their employment options, their access to medical specialists, and their quality of life.

In addition, highway construction would cut three diverse, low-income communities in half. At a minimum, removing M83 from the master plan would prevent the county from repeating a common historical injustice. Indeed, many communities these days are discussing the removal of destructive old highways from the 1960s that split low-income communities and continue to impose additional social, economic, environmental, and health burdens on their residents.

M83 might have seemed like a good idea when it was first proposed over 60 years ago, but now Montgomery County knows better. M83 would harm streams, wetlands, parklands, public health, the global climate, and Montgomery County's plans for land use, housing, equity, and economic opportunity, all while failing to achieve even its own objective of better mobility. Montgomery County needs more and better transit, including MARC and RideOn; more affordable and accessible housing around transit hubs; and more sustainable, compact, climate-resilient land use. Montgomery County does not need a new, obsolete, costly highway.

The best time to remove Midcounty Highway Extended (M83) from the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways was any time in the past 60 years, but the second best time is now.

ACT is not eligible for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status because of our advocacy work.