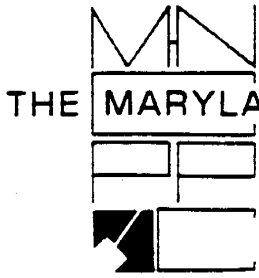


**ATTACHMENT # 1**

**TITLE:** 14 August 1997 Letter from Chairman Hussmann to President,  
Montgomery County Council transmitting comments of the  
Planning Board regarding the 1997 Draft Environmental Impact  
Statement, with enclosures. Pages circle 1 to circle 69.



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

(301) 495-4605

Montgomery County Planning Board  
Office of the Chairman

August 14, 1997

The Honorable Marilyn J. Praisner, President  
Montgomery County Council  
Werner Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville MD 20850

Dear Ms. Praisner:

This letter transmits the comments of the Planning Board concerning the Intercountry Connector (ICC) alternatives presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS).

The Draft EIS was released to the public in April and the State conducted a series of public hearings which concluded on June 7, 1997. Our Planning staff reviewed the Draft EIS and prepared a report on its "completeness and clarity" for local decision making, a copy of which is enclosed (May 23, 1997). That report requested additional and clarifying information for purposes of better addressing local concerns and issues.

Subsequent to the Draft EIS public hearings, the Planning Board held a series of four worksessions on the ICC alternatives. The Board received additional public comment at each worksession, reviewed information from the DEIS and the State hearings, and, received a report from our staff on the alternatives, a copy of which is also enclosed.

During our 15 hours of worksessions on the ICC we asked many questions and received useful responses from our staff and from the SHA. I have attached a copy of all of the SHA responses and our staff reports for your use. In addition, our Geographic Information System (GIS) capabilities have been advanced to allow us (and you) to receive layers of information regarding each ICC alternative at large or small scale. We hope that these capabilities and our background information will assist the Council in its deliberations.

Taking the above into consideration, the Planning Board unanimously wishes to make the following comments relative to its review of the alternatives:

1. After reviewing reports from our planning, parks, and environmental staffs, from the Environmental Protection Agency, the State Department of Natural Resources, the

*MJP*

1

the Planning Board finds the Master Plan Alignment through the Paint Branch and Northwest Branch watersheds to be unacceptable from a community, park, and environmental point of view. We also believe that it is not capable of receiving the Federal permits required for its construction.

We recommend that the section of the Master Plan Alignment between US 29 and Norbeck Road (MD 28) be dropped from further consideration.

2. We have directed our staff to develop a six-lane "hybrid" option that is based on the best features of the alternatives that would remain for County Council consideration. In preparing that option, the Planning Board has requested that variations of the staff "hybrid" be explored:
  - o One that provides for consideration of tolls and more access control than the preliminary hybrid that we discussed on July 31, see Exhibit "A",
  - o one that is based on a four-lane parkway with full grade separations, see Exhibit "B;" and,
  - o a parkway option with some grade separation but not at all intersections.

We need and have requested additional alignment and intersection analyses from the State in order to evaluate each of the above. We intend to review the above alternative at our next meeting on September 11. At this time, however, it is not clear whether or not the state will be able to provide the information and analyses that we have requested. We believe that it is crucial to our September 11 discussions that the information regarding each of the above options be available to the Planning Board in time for our review prior to the worksession.

3. All of the ICC alternatives have significant impacts on parks, particularly on Northwest Branch, Paint Branch and Rock Creek Parks, and on the Mill Creek Stream Valley Park.

The Park Commission has a role and responsibility in the federal review process to offer our assessment on the Section 4(f) park impacts and on any mitigation plans that may be proposed. We have analyzed park impacts but the DEIS does not contain specific park mitigation proposals at this stage in the process. We have been assured by SHA that they will work with our staff regarding specific mitigation recommendations and that the Board will have time to review them before the final EIS is released. The Park Commission's comments on the Section 4(f) impacts will be offered at that time. We fully expect that the Park Commission's 4(f) recommendations will be considered by the SHA before the completion of Final Environmental Impact Statement.

During the Board's discussion, we received background data and briefings regarding other ongoing transportation studies, including the Beltway and I-270 reports. These additional reports have highlighted for us the larger issue of transportation needs in our community. It is clear that we face a very difficult future in meeting the transportation needs of our community both physically and financially. There is not enough money to meet our pressing needs. It is critical that priorities be set. We urge that the County Council take the lead in developing countywide transportation priorities and the funding strategy required to implement them. We hope to discuss these broader issues with the County Council during our October Bi-Annual meeting.

Sincerely,

*William H. Hussmann*  
William H. Hussmann  
Chairman

Enclosures

WHH/ja:bp/arh

cc: County Executive  
Secretary Winstead  
Parker Williams  
Neil Pedersen  
State Senators  
State Delegates  
ICC Steering Committee  
Prince George's County Executive  
Prince George's County Planning Board

# PLANNING BOARD ALTERNATIVES FOR FURTHER STUDY

## Staff "hybrid" Alternative

### o **Components**

1. Hybrid Alignment: from I-370 to I-95
2. Master Plan Alignment (MPA) : from US 29 to I-95 including two-lane connection to Fairland Road
3. Randolph Road Improvements [Upgrade Existing Roads Alternative (UERA) Unless Indicated]
  - o Rockville Pike (MD 355)
  - o Viers Mill Road (MD 586)
  - o Connecticut Avenue (MD 185)
  - o Georgia Avenue (MD 97) -- Glenmont Master Plan Interchange
  - o New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650)

### **Details of Components:**

#### o Hybrid Alignment

I-370 to MD 650:

Northern Alignment ( NA)with Rock Creek Park Partial Avoidance Option and connection to M-83 (Midcounty Highway - MM 198) Norbeck Option 2

MD 650 to East of Allnut Lane:

MM 198 from MD 650 to Oak Hill Road, then MD 198 (Spencerville Road) from Oak Hill Road to Allnut Lane (a 6-lane divided roadway)

Allnut Lane to Van Dusen Road:

MD 198 alignment using the New Birmingham Manor Option

#### o Hybrid Interchanges

I-380/MD 355 /Shady Grove Road -- same as MPA  
M-83 -- Four-lane connection with partial interchange

10/15

4

MD 97 -- Same as NA  
MD 650 -- Same as NA  
US 29 -- Same as MM 198  
I-95 -- Same as MM 198

o **Hybrid Typical Section**

Same as MPA/NA west of MD 650 (but probably a reduced median 72 to 22 feet in Winter's Run)  
Same as MM 198 east of MD 650  
West of MD 650 same transit, HOV (2+) and toll assumptions  
10-foot multi-use trail

o **Alignment from Fairland Road to I-95**

Six-lane divided major highway  
Two-lane connection to Fairland Road with grade-separation of Old Columbia Pike (no connection)  
Trumpet Interchange at US 29 (No US 29 to Fairland Road movements)  
At-grade intersection with Briggs Chaney Road  
Grade-separation of Old Gunpowder Road  
Access to A-59 and east of I-95 to be addressed by Prince George's County  
No tolls or HOV special treatment

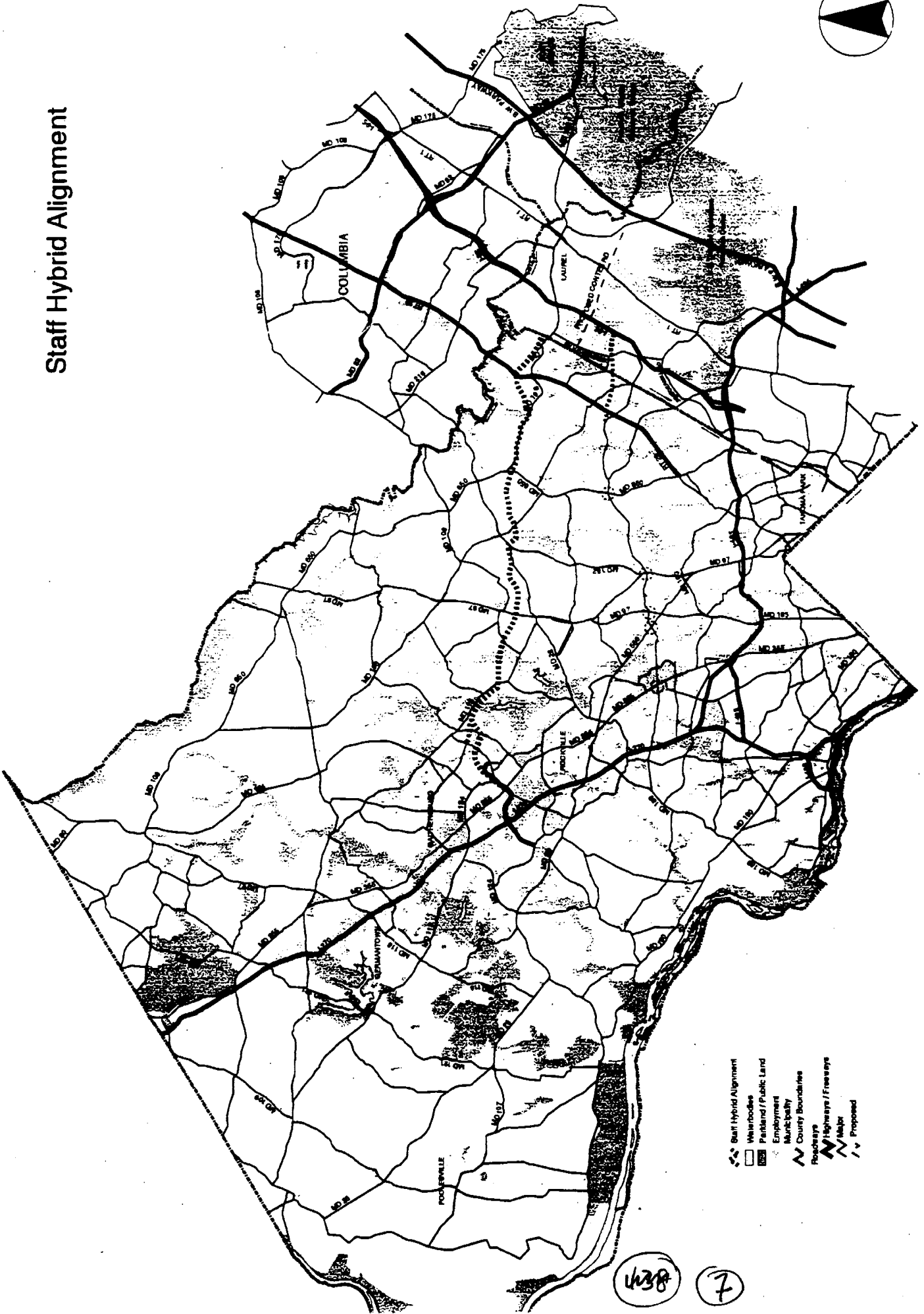
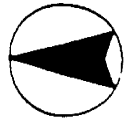
**Limited access 'true' parkway**

- o Alignment: same as the Master Plan Alignment from I-370 to west of New Hampshire Avenue, then east along the Spencerville Option 1 route to Oak Hill Road, then heading eastward to intersect the base Northern Alternative route (this variation was recommended for consideration by EPA). The alignment would continue east following the NA route to Relocated US 29, and then following the New Birmingham Manor route to MD 198 just west of its intersection with Riding Stable Road.
- o Interchanges at I-370, Muncaster Mill Road, Georgia Avenue, Layhill Road, Norwood Road, New Hampshire Avenue, Relocated US 29, and MD 198 (partial). The full interchanges are designed as tight diamonds, except at I-370 and Relocated US 29. Grade separated elsewhere; no at-grade intersections; or driveways; except for access to adjacent park improvements.

- o 50 mph design speed; 45 mph posted speed.
- o 4 through lanes from I-370 to Relocated US 29; 6 through lanes from Relocated US 29 to MD 198.
- o This would be a toll facility.
- o 10-foot wide multi-use trail. Reinforced grass shoulders.

ARH:08/14/97

# Staff Hybrid Alignment

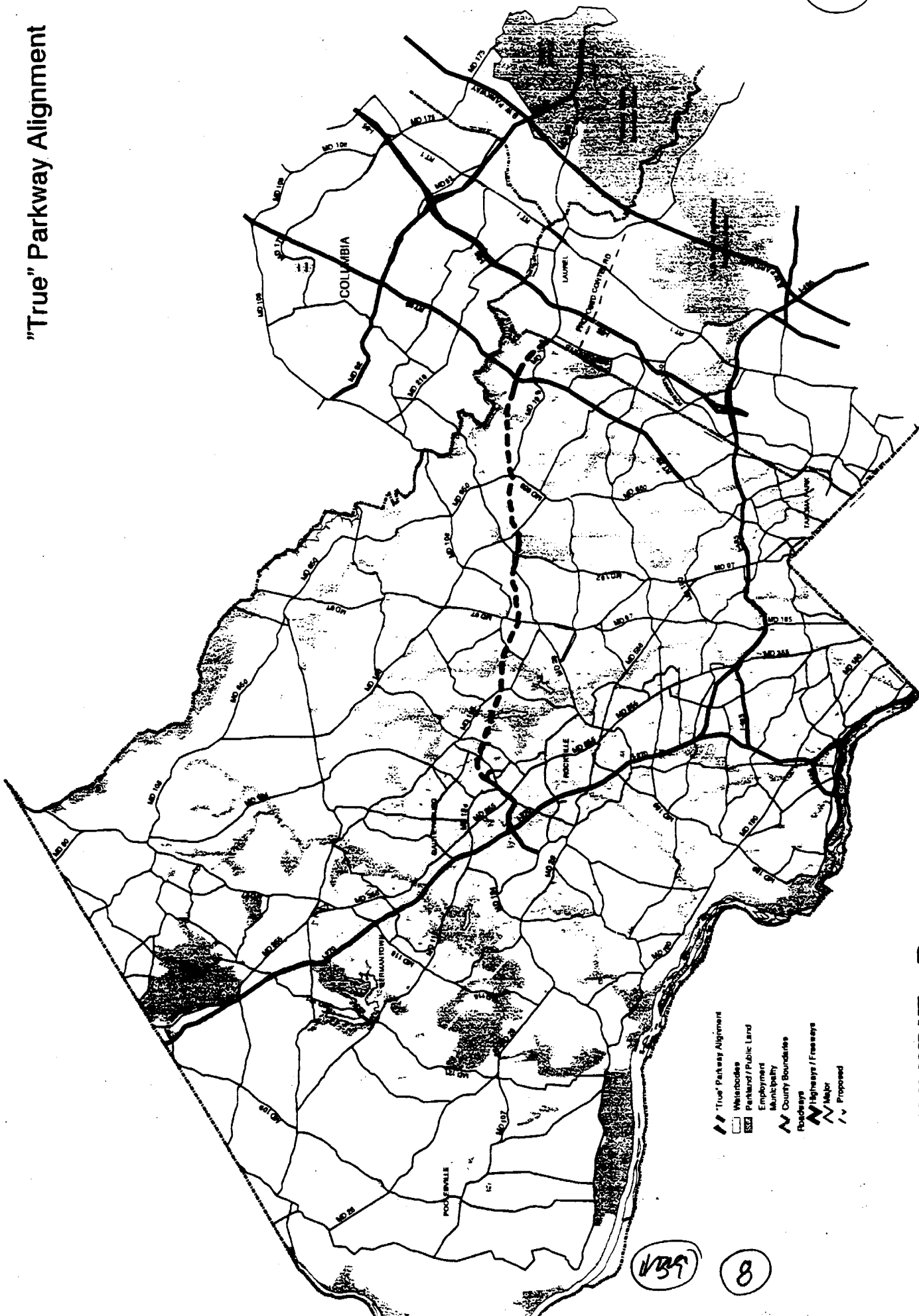


- Staff Hybrid Alignment
- Waterbodies
- Parkland / Public Land
- Employment
- Municipality
- County Boundaries
- Roadways
- Highways / Freeways
- Major
- Proposed

1438 7



# "True" Parkway Alignment

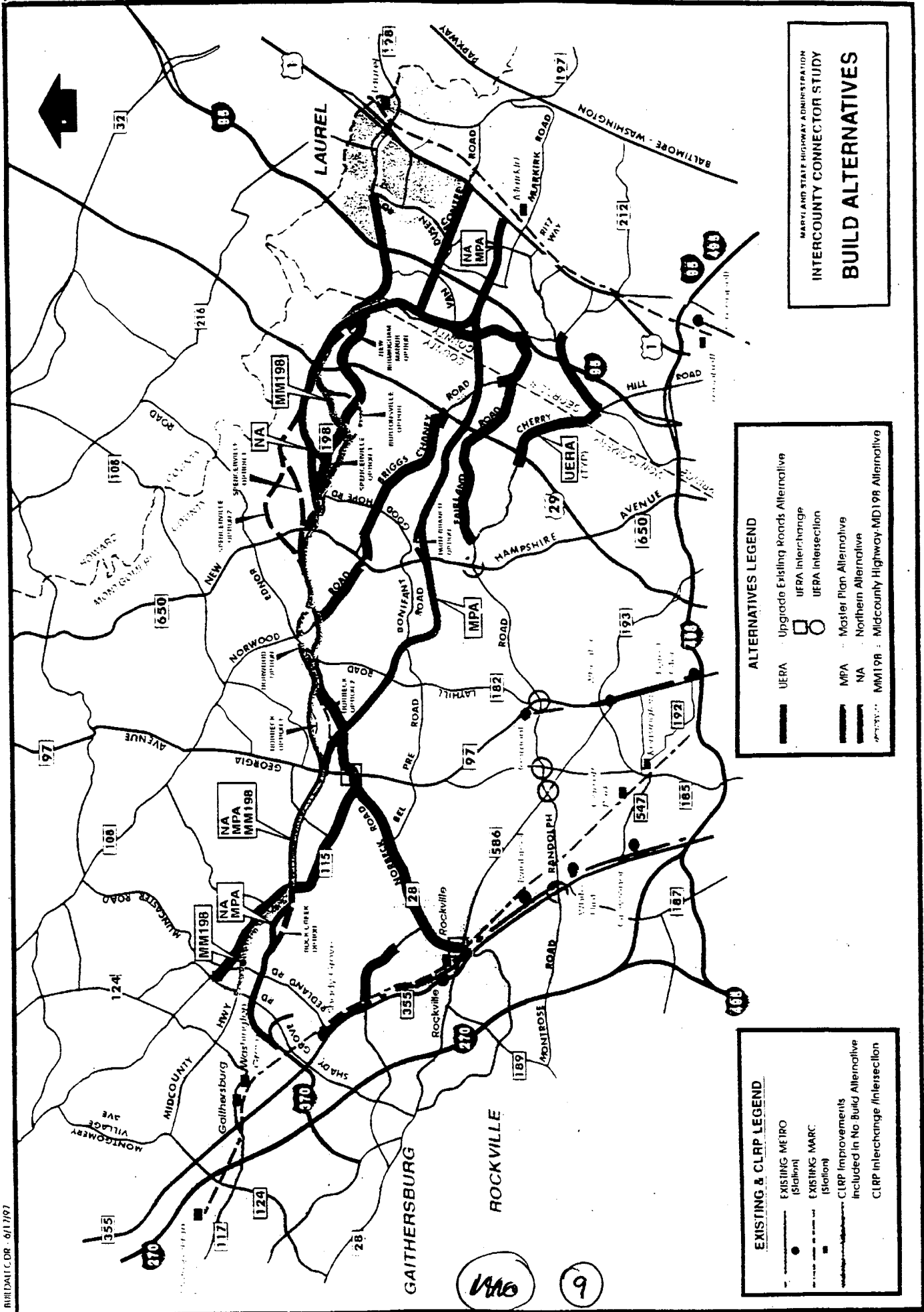


- True Parkway Alignment
- Waterbodies
- Parkland / Public Land
- Employment
- Municipality
- County Boundaries
- Roadways
- Highways / Freeways
- Major
- Proposed

## EXHIBIT B

1534

8



MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
**INTERCOUNTY CONNECTOR STUDY**  
**BUILD ALTERNATIVES**

**ALTERNATIVES LEGEND**

- UERA Upgrade Existing Roads Alternative
- MPA Master Plan Alternative
- NA Northern Alternative
- MM198 Midcounty Highway-MD198 Alternative
- UERA Interchange
- UERA Intersection

**EXISTING & CLRP LEGEND**

- EXISTING METRO (Station)
- EXISTING MARC (Station)
- CLRP Improvements Included in No Build Alternative
- CLRP Interchange /Intersection

1460 9