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Proposed red line gains some momentum

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At a press conference earlier today at UMB Biopark hosted by the GBC, a number of medical institutions and colleges voiced their support for the Light Rail Red Line Alternative 4C.

The Alternative 4C plan would create an east-west light rail line that would stretch 14.6 miles from Woodlawn to Johns Hopkins Bayview. The plan calls for two tunnels—one under Cooks Lane and another under downtown Baltimore and Fells Point.

The alternative line, which is projected to cost \$1.6 billion, would carry 42,000 passengers per weekday - more than triple the number of riders that are currently using existing bus routes in the corridor, according to Donald C. Fry, CEO of the GBC. It would take 41 minutes to take the red line from one end to the other, half the time of the current bus route.

But what seemed to be the paramount issue today was the importance of keeping area college students happy enough to stay in Baltimore after they graduate.

According to Kristen Campbell of the Baltimore Collegetown Network, the most important issue to area students is transportation.

With a red line, there would be connecting stops to both the existing light rail and metro systems, making it easier to get to areas such as Fells Point and Hopkins Bayview from schools in the county.

What's the next step, you ask?

Next month, there will be four public hearings, beginning on Nov. 6. After the hearing process closes on January 5, the Maryland Department of Transportation will meet with the governor with the information gathered. They will then announce a locally preferred option that gets submitted to the federal government.

It might sound like it's a ways off, but from a budget standpoint, the building of the line could start as early as July 2012.

Below is a video from the press conference. [Click here](#) for more information on the public hearing dates.

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