



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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April 7, 2020

The Honorable Gregory I. Slater
Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Dear Secretary Slater:

Thank you for the opportunity to present Charles County's transportation priorities for Fiscal Year 2021, in anticipation of our annual tour meeting with you in the fall. Throughout the past year, we have been working closely with the individual modal administrations of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), with our elected colleagues in neighboring jurisdictions, with the Transportation Planning Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and with the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland to address our significant local and regional priorities.

First, the County Commissioners wish to express our sincere appreciation for the funding commitment to construct the replacement of the Governor Harry W. Nice / Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Memorial Bridge, which has already begun mobilization efforts. The new bridge will dramatically improve the aging and antiquated structure's safety and associated congestion while providing the State and County with improved access to interstate commerce. With that said, we anticipate that the new bridge will contribute to increased traffic volumes in the US 301/MD 5 corridor, which underscores the need to expand high-capacity rapid transit service to Charles County.

Along those lines, we also wish to express our continued appreciation to staff of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the Maryland State Highway Administration for their sustained efforts to assist Charles and Prince George's counties in planning for the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) project, a fixed-route, high-capacity transit service operating in a dedicated 18.7 mile transitway in the MD 5/U.S. 301 corridor from the Branch Avenue Metrorail Station in Prince George's County to Waldorf and White Plains in Charles County. In 2017, the MTA and their selected consultants completed the SMRT Alternatives Report, which evaluated the merits of alternative transit modes, updated ridership projections, and estimated the potential economic impact of the project, thereby subjecting proposed transit alignments and station locations to detailed analysis. To codify the alignment recommendations presented in the 2017 Alternatives Report and the 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Study, we have integrated the studies' preferred alignment into the Charles County Comprehensive Plan as well as the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor Master Plan.

As you know from our previous meetings and discussions, Charles County's highest transportation priority is the completion of "Project Planning" for the SMRT project. We are therefore requesting that MDOT take all necessary steps to complete the design, engineering, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes and secure a Record of Decision for the SMRT project. As the FY2020-FY2025 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) did not include any further funding for the SMRT project, we strongly urge you to continue the progress generated by both the 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study and the 2017 Alternatives Report document and to work to secure a Record of Decision for this project. In addition, the elected officials of Charles and Prince George's counties, as well as the public, maintain that Light Rail Transit (LRT) is the preferred modal option for this service. This preference has been expressed in numerous meetings and in comments received by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) on the 2017 SMRT Alternatives Report during the public forum and comment period. Both Charles and Prince George's counties submitted official comments to MTA during the public comment period that state that local preferences are for LRT service using Alignment Alternative 4 and Beltway (I-495) Crossing Option 8A; these alignment alternatives are recommended in the final version of the 2017 Alternatives Report.

As you are aware, the 2017 SMRT Alternatives Report recommends that Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) be the selected transit mode for the SMRT project based on a lower initial capital cost and slightly faster estimated travel time for riders. Upon review of the 2017 SMRT Alternatives Report, however, we have found that there are significant advantages to pursuing LRT over BRT for this project. These advantages include higher ridership numbers on nearly all LRT alignments considered, more private sector investment and property value enhancements, greater longevity of vehicles and equipment, and annual operating costs that are roughly \$10 million less than BRT on comparable alignments. The Executive Summary of the May 2017 Final Report further highlights this disparity by stating: "LRT is easily expandable, if needed to meet capacity needs beyond 2040, by adding an additional car to the train;" however, the "...3-bus platoon BRT configuration would not have capacity to handle passenger loads beyond 2040." It further states: "Overall BRT [capital] costs are approximately \$0.5 billion less than LRT costs," however, the "Annual operating costs for LRT are approximately \$10 million lower for LRT than for BRT," (SMRT Alternatives Report (2017), p. 4).

Since the elected officials of the Southern Maryland region presented their first request for State action on this priority to Governor William Donald Schaefer in 1988, there have been five studies of rapid transit service in the MD 5/U.S. 301 corridor between the Branch Avenue Metrorail Station and Charles County. While we are disappointed that the 2017 Alternatives Report recommended that the transit mode be BRT based on a lower initial capital cost, we hope and expect that the Project Planning phase re-evaluate these recommendations and more fully consider the long-term advantages of LRT.

With regard to funding, and as stated in our April 25, 2017, April 24, 2018, and March 12, 2019 letters to your office, we are very concerned that MDOT's CTP continues to propose that work on this project be suspended. After nearly 30 years of successive studies have proven the feasibility and benefit of implementing this project, work has been repeatedly suspended and progress halted, until local and regional political pressure compelled further action—in the form of another study.

As stated in our 2017, 2018, and 2019 Transportation Priority Letters, right-of-way and corridor preservation is critical to the future viability of the SMRT project. Not only are transit needs in this congested and rapidly growing highway corridor steadily increasing, it is vitally important that a 70-foot wide, grade-separated transitway for future high-capacity, fixed-route transit service be preserved and integrated with improvements that the State Highway Administration is planning along this corridor. Continued delays in beginning the formal "Project Planning/NEPA" phase of the SMRT project could result in a corresponding lag in the preservation of the transit way. Without prompt State action, additional growth and development could close the door on this project forever.

Charles County has stayed on course to redevelop Downtown Waldorf as the future light rail corridor for transit-oriented, mixed-use development. Concurrent with MTA's 2010 Transit Corridor Study, Charles County completed the Waldorf Urban Design Study, which resulted in the re-zoning of 300 acres of downtown Waldorf as higher-density, transit supportive, mixed-use development. Building on the momentum of both initiatives, the County followed the re-zoning with a "Phase One" development plan and an implementation strategy to launch the Waldorf urban redevelopment effort and is making a \$30 million investment in water, sewer, stormwater and road infrastructure improvements in the future transit corridor. Private sector investment along the transit corridor has already begun as evidenced by the forthcoming Waldorf Station development, bringing mixed-use, high density development adjacent to the first planned transit station in Charles County.

In order to secure a Record of Decision and complete 30 percent of the required engineering for the project, our project team estimates that \$27 million in additional State funds will be needed. This cost can be offset by the cost savings incurred by MTA while drafting the 2017 SMRT Alternatives Report. It will be necessary for us to complete "Project Planning" in order to position this project for future consideration in the federal "New Starts" program. Our goal is to complete this formal planning phase within the next two to three years. We need MDOT to include this project in the current (FY2020-FY2025) CTP and commit additional funding for its completion. Our funding request represents a small fraction of the revenue that the State of Maryland is expected to receive for transportation projects. We recommend starting the "Project Planning" phase immediately while the work of the SMRT Alternatives Report is still fresh, so the project can move seamlessly into the next phase of work without loss of momentum.

Partnerships and collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions are essential for the successful delivery of the SMRT service. Throughout the planning process for the SMRT project, we have worked closely with Prince George's County's elected and appointed officials, including the Prince George's County Executive and Council, the staff of the Prince George's County Planning Department (the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission), and the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation. On November 15, 2011, the Prince George's County Council unanimously adopted a resolution urging the Maryland Department of Transportation to include the Southern Maryland high-capacity, fixed-route transit project (preferably Light Rail) in the CTP and designate it as the State's next major transit priority. In this resolution, Prince George's County makes a commitment to work in partnership with Charles County, urges State and federal officials to support this initiative, and agrees to promote transit-oriented development around proposed transit stations in the corridor. Since that pivotal commitment in the 2011 Resolution, the two Counties have worked together to bring this project to fruition for our constituents and businesses.

As an expression of regional support, the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland has consistently designated this project as the number one regional transit priority for Southern Maryland. The project has also received the support of United States Senators Benjamin Cardin and Chris Van Hollen. In correspondence with previous MDOT Secretaries and the Federal Transit Administration, these Senators voice strong support for the allocation of federal transit planning funds for this greatly needed project. Accommodating future high-capacity transit service in the vitally important MD 5/U.S. 301 corridor from Charles County to Branch Avenue will help preserve highway capacity, manage congestion, enhance local mobility, facilitate shorter commutes, and focus job opportunities, economic development, and investment opportunities near transit.

The Charles County Commissioners support a comprehensive approach that integrates transportation and land use policy. Through the implementation of the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan and the associated Zoning and Design Guidelines, the County has made major strides to create higher density, transit-oriented development in the urban core of the County's Development District. By providing the necessary mix of land uses in a


pedestrian and bicyclist-friendly environment, these efforts seek to significantly reduce vehicle trips. These actions will enable us to focus future growth in Waldorf and White Plains while reducing sprawl and suburban development pressures in the County's rural areas. These policies will also support future investment in high-capacity public transit, help to create a reverse commute, and reduce peak traffic volumes on state roadways to preserve existing and planned capacity. Our planned residential and commercial development densities have been designed to support future rail transit, alternative modes, pedestrians, and bicycles. These densities are consistent with the Federal Transit Administration's *Guidelines and Standards for Transit Supportive Land Uses* and are intended to qualify the SMRT project for future "New Starts" funds. We believe that only by coordinating our transportation priorities with land use decisions in a comprehensive and integrated strategy can we successfully meet our transportation needs for the next generation.

In addition to our top priorities, we have attached a list of the County's additional priorities (*Attachment 1*) for the upcoming year, which are presented in categories that correspond to the divisions of MDOT that oversee these activities. These projects are needed to facilitate the ongoing implementation of our long-range Comprehensive Plan and Sub-Area Plans. We request your commitment to these transportation system improvements.


We thank you for your continued cooperation and support, and we look forward to working with you and your staff on these priorities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Deborah A. Carpenter, AICP, Director of the Department of Planning & Growth Management by calling (301) 645-0595, or by E-Mail to CarpentD@charlescountymd.gov.

Very Truly,

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND



Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*



Bobby Rucci, *Vice President*



Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.



Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.



Gilbert O. Bowling, III

Attachment (1)

cc: Mr. Tim Smith, SHA
Mr. Kevin Quinn, MTA
Mr. William Pines, MdTA
Mr. Mark Belton, Charles County
Ms. Deborah Hall, Charles County
Ms. Deborah Carpenter, Charles County
Mr. William Shreve, Charles County
Mr. John Stevens, Charles County

Mayor Jeannine James, Town of La Plata
Ms. Danielle Mandley, Town of La Plata
Mayor Brandon Paulin, Town of Indian Head
Mr. Ryan Hicks, Town of Indian Head
Mr. John Hartline, Tri-County Council
Mr. Jason Groth, Charles County
Mr. Jeffry Barnett, Charles County
Mr. Stephen Staples, Charles County

ATTACHMENT 1

Top Priority Transportation Improvement Projects

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Fixed-route, high-capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains

As mentioned above, the highest transportation priority for Charles County is the appropriation of funding to initiate and complete the Project Planning phase of the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) project. We are requesting that MDOT undertake all necessary steps to complete the design, engineering, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes and to secure a Record of Decision for the SMRT project. The Alternatives Report for this project was completed in March of 2017 by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and sought to formalize alignments, determine ridership estimates, and select a transit mode (Light Rail Transit or Bus Rapid Transit) for a fixed-route, high-capacity transit line that uses a dedicated transit way to connect the Branch Avenue Metrorail Station to Waldorf/White Plains. We are seeking a commitment to this transit project in the FY2020-FY2025 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) for "Project Planning" so that we may continue the momentum generated by the 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study and the 2017 SMRT Alternatives Report toward achieving a "Record of Decision," followed by detailed engineering and future construction. This project is the transit component of the transit-oriented, mixed-use, walkable new urban center planned for downtown Waldorf in the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC). The collective goal of this integrated transportation and land use strategy is to increase mobility for our residents (there are 92,350 daily commuter trips from Charles and St. Mary's Counties) while helping to ease congestion in the MD 5/US 301 corridor and the Southern Maryland region.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project is consistent with the goals of the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan. Specific "Comp Plan" goals include: Goal 8.7 "Concentrate 75% of residential development in the Development District which includes development density and intensity in mixed use districts in the Transit Corridor to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation;" Goal 8.9 "Where possible, encourage and promote Transit Oriented Development within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor in order to support the planned fixed-route, high-capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metro-rail station to Waldorf-White Plains, as well as support the urbanization of Waldorf;" and Goal 8.12 "Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This project is consistent with each of the seven goals outlined in the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan (published in January 2019). Specifically, the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit project seeks to *provide better transportation choices and connections* by enhancing access to transit service for the residents of Charles County and the surrounding Counties. The expansion of transit service in our region will simultaneously respond to the rapid growth of both our workforce and the demand for transit service, as reflected by increasing ridership on MTA Commuter Bus routes that serve Southern Maryland. In addition, by integrating a new high-capacity transit system with a new high-density land use pattern centered around transit-based activity centers that provide pedestrian and bicycle access to transit, this project will also

modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system. Furthermore, this investment will support Maryland's efforts to *ensure environmental protection and sensitivity.* High-capacity transit projects improve air quality by dramatically reducing vehicle emissions and they catalyze high-density, compact development that furthers the State's Smart Growth Policies. This project will also *facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion.* Studies have shown that fixed route transit service provides a strong incentive for private business investment, contributing to the *economic opportunity* that the Maryland Transportation Plan seeks to promote. In addition, because a large share of Charles County residents commute to Washington, D.C and inner-ring counties of the Washington Metropolitan area, the SMRT project will reduce the demand for travel in solo-occupancy vehicles, thereby reducing congestion.

By reducing the number of vehicle trips, the SMRT project will also *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system* by decreasing the number of lives lost and injuries sustained on the state's transportation system and by providing a resilient multimodal system. The SMRT project will also *improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system to enhance the customer experience* by minimizing travel delays and by improving the predictability of travel times through reductions in the percent of Vehicle Miles Traveled in congested conditions on the arterial network, through decreases in the annual hours of delay on the MDOT highway network, and by improving Travel Time Reliability on the State's highway network. Although the SMRT project will require substantial capital expenditures for construction, we believe that if the project is delivered as a Light Rail system, it will *promote fiscal responsibility.* The 2017 SMRT Alternatives Report detailed that a Light Rail system, while being more expensive than a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system to construct, will require roughly \$10 million less in annual operating costs than a BRT system and will be better able to expand service capacity. Over time, the Light Rail system's significant savings in operating costs and ability to expand service will further MDOT's goals to *promote fiscal responsibility.* Furthermore, the construction of a Light Rail system will reduce the demand for highway system expansion while simultaneously decreasing the need for maintenance activities by generating reductions in the number of vehicle trips taken on the highway system.

This project also supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan by increasing transit ridership. The construction of the SMRT service would increase the availability, attractiveness, and convenience of public transportation while increasing the capacity of the State's transit network. In addition, this project would reduce the demand for automobile trips between the County and job centers in the District of Columbia and Prince George's County, thereby reducing CO₂ emissions and associated air pollutants.

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

US 301 Corridor Waldorf Improvements

As congestion in the region continues to increase, the MD 5 (Branch Avenue) and US 301 corridors continue to carry the largest volume of vehicles in Southern Maryland. While our primary priority is delivering high-capacity transit to the region, it is understood that such a transit service would not serve all destinations. This corridor is also experiencing substantial increases in truck traffic as an alternate route to Interstate 95, further contributing to the congestion. Therefore, Charles County continues to seek the needed corridor improvements along US 301 in Waldorf and White Plains. The County Commissioners are eager to accelerate the design of full interchanges at MD 5 (Mattawoman-Beantown Road) as well as MD 228 (Berry Road), as recently funded in the FY2019-FY2024 CTP.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The US 301 Corridor Waldorf Improvements Project is consistent with the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan and is listed in Table 8-5 as State Project "S-1." Specific "Comp Plan" goals showing the project's consistency include: Goal 8.2 "Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service;" Goal 8.4 "Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County;" Goal 8.5 "Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic;" and Goal 8.6 "Create greater circulation through road network connectivity, both in redevelopment areas as well as in new development areas between new and existing neighborhoods."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan:

The US 301 Corridor Improvements would *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system*. US 301 is a primary evacuation route for Washington D.C. and the surrounding area because the Harry W. Nice Bridge is the southern-most crossing of the Potomac River to points south. Truck traffic and commuter traffic has continued to increase and the requested improvements will assist in moving people out of the area in the event of a national security incident. In addition, because a significant share of vehicle accidents occur at intersections, reducing the number of conflict points through grade separation will decrease the number of traffic fatalities, personal injuries, and preventable accidents.

Furthermore, the planned pedestrian and bicycle improvements that are being incorporated into the MD 228/US 301 project will reduce the annual number of bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and injuries on all Maryland roads by providing the opportunity for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely cross US 301 and MD 228. These roadway improvements are also consistent with MDOT's goal to *improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system to enhance the customer experience* by maximizing the use of the existing roadway infrastructure and improving the overall performance of the facilities. Finally, the requested corridor enhancements will further Maryland's efforts to *ensure environmental protection and sensitivity* by having a positive effect on air quality through easing congestion and substantially reducing vehicle idle time in traffic. This becomes especially important as truck traffic increases and further compounds the issues of non-attainment of air quality standards in the Washington D.C. region.

Pedestrian Safety Enhancements at Intersections Involving State Roadways (US 301 at Smallwood Drive; MD 228 at Western Parkway)

Pedestrian safety is a top priority for both the County and the State alike but many intersections involving State roadways in Charles County lack adequate pedestrian accommodations such as ADA-compliant curb ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian signal phases. To improve pedestrian safety and connectivity, and to complement investments in high-capacity transit service, we are requesting that MDOT install ADA-compliant curb ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian signal phases at two intersections: US 301 at Smallwood Drive and MD 228 at Western Parkway. These intersections serve as significant barriers for pedestrians wishing to access nearby commercial, residential, and institutional land uses, and the lack of pedestrian accommodations at these intersections significantly degrades pedestrian safety. The pedestrian environment and pedestrian safety would be improved dramatically by installing curb ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian signal phases at these intersections.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

Installing pedestrian safety enhancements at these intersections would allow the County to progress towards meeting the following “Comp Plan” goals: Goal 8.1 “Develop, maintain, and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra- County basis;” Goal 8.3 “Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development;” Goal 8.4 “Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County;” and Goal 8.14 “Support the implementation of the Charles County Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, which will provide adequate and safe recreational and functional transportation connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping, and transit centers.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This project is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan’s goals to *provide better transportation choices and connections, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland’s multimodal transportation system, to facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion, to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, and to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity.*

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan’s bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MDTA)

Gov. Harry Nice Bridge Replacement

Continuing the work that has begun to construct an expansion of the Governor Harry Nice Bridge to 4 lanes, consistent with the southbound and northbound approaches of U.S. 301 to the bridge, is necessary to alleviate the safety concerns related to the bridge’s current configuration and to reduce traffic congestion. This bridge is also a major limiting factor in the effectiveness of the evacuation path from Washington D.C. to points south. Should a natural disaster or an issue of Homeland Security arise, this bridge’s current two-lane capacity would create a major bottleneck. The County’s 2016 Comprehensive Plan recommends increasing the capacity of the bridge to address this issue. Increased traffic capacity of the bridge would improve traffic flow, reduce congestion, and provide an evacuation route of greater capacity.

We appreciate the coordination efforts of the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) staff through the Project Planning, Design, and Right-of-way acquisition Phases of this critical project and we strongly encourage MDTA to continue to seek Federal or State funding for the inclusion of a separated shared-use path for bicycle and pedestrian travel over the bridge.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The Governor Harry Nice Bridge Replacement project is listed in the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 8-5 as Project “S-20.” Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include Goal 8.2 “Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service;” and Goal 8.3 “Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion and promote commerce and economic development.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan:

By replacing a bridge facility that closes frequently due to vehicle accidents, this project is consistent with MDOT's goal to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system* and will likely generate reductions in the number and rate of transportation related fatalities and injuries. In addition, this project seeks to *facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland* by replacing a bridge that currently serves as the most limiting factor for safe and efficient travel of people and goods between Charles County and Virginia. This project is also consistent with MDOT's goal to *maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system* through its replacement of aging infrastructure that will not only maintain, but will also improve, the performance of the facility.

Additional Priority Transportation Improvement Projects – The following projects are listed under responsible state agencies and their divisions, and are not necessarily listed in priority order:

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Project Planning Priorities

US 301 Interim Improvements – The purpose of this project would be to provide interim improvements to the US 301 Corridor in Waldorf and White Plains to alleviate congestion while the US 301 Corridor Study is being completed in the longer term. This would include the construction of an interchange along US 301 at MD 228/MD 5 Business and US 301 at MD 5 (Mattawoman-Beantown Road). These intersections carry the highest volume of traffic in Charles County.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

As with the complete US 301 Corridor Waldorf Improvement Project listed earlier in this Priority Letter, the interim US 301 Improvement Projects are consistent with the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan and is listed in Table 8-5 as State Project "S-1." Specific "Comp Plan" goals showing the project's consistency include: Goal 8.2 "Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service;" Goal 8.3 "Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development;" and Goal 8.5 "Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan:

The US 301 Corridor Improvements would be consistent with MDOT's goals to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system* and to *maintain a high standard* by maximizing the use of the existing roadway infrastructure and improving the overall performance of the facilities. In addition, the requested corridor enhancements will further Maryland's efforts to *ensure environmental protection and sensitivity* by having a positive effect on air quality through easing congestion and substantially reducing vehicle idle time in traffic. As with the full US 301 Corridor improvement project, these improvements are of increasing importance as the truck traffic increases and continues to impact the issues of non-attainment of air quality standards in the Washington D.C. region.

MD 5 Business/MD 925 Corridor Improvements – As a direct action to improve mobility, and in concert with implementation of the County’s Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC), we have requested the construction of roadway improvements along MD 5 Business and MD 925 within the new Waldorf Urban Center zoning district for mixed-use Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Consistent with the Waldorf Urban Design Guidelines and the County’s Urban Road Standards, we seek to reconstruct these roadways as Urban Arterials with barrier-separated bicycle lanes, expanded sidewalks, and bicycle/pedestrian accommodations at intersections to assist the County in creating the planned walkable, transit-oriented community.

We are grateful for the improvements along MD 5 Business that were completed in 2014. The project included intersection improvements at MD 925/Old Washington Road, including ADA compliant crosswalks and sidewalks, the addition of a short bike lane along a new northbound right-turn lane, signal reconstruction, and minor stormwater management improvements. These improvements dovetail with the County’s planned improvements along Old Washington Road to the north. To augment these improvements, we request that the State provide additional turn lane and pedestrian improvements on the east-bound approach of MD 5 Business, thereby completing the reconstruction of the intersection consistent with the Waldorf Urban Design Guidelines. We further request that SHA work with the County to improve the MD 5 Business corridor within these same limits to reconstruct the roadway to the Urban Design Standards with separated bicycle facilities and expanded sidewalks as outlined in the Waldorf Urban Design Guidelines. These improvements will help create the urban landscape of downtown Waldorf, consistent with the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor and “Phase One” development plan while improving safety, mobility, and access management within the corridor. As always, the County is willing to work with the State on property acquisition as needed.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The MD 5 Bus./MD 925 Corridor Improvements project is consistent with the following specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals: Goal 8.5 “Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic;” Goal 8.9 “Where possible, encourage and promote Transit Oriented Development within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor in order to support the planned fixed-route, high-capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metrorail station to Waldorf-White Plains, as well as support the urbanization of Waldorf;” Goal 8.11 “Require development to reserve and dedicate to the County the right-of-way for roads, park and ride facilities, and the planned fixed-route high-capacity transit service within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor;” and Goal 8.13 “Support and promote the preservation of the locally preferred high-capacity fixed-route transit alignment as designated in the Maryland Transit Administration’s Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study. Ensure that facilities for pedestrians, bicycles, and daily parking are considered and included in capital and development projects as appropriate, particularly in the vicinity of proposed transit station locations.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

The MD 5 Business/MD 925 Corridor Improvements are consistent with MDOT’s goal to *maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland’s multimodal transportation system* by maximizing the use of the existing roadway infrastructure, improving the overall performance of the facilities, and expanding pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. This project also seeks to further enhance Maryland’s efforts to *facilitate economic opportunity* by creating and supporting economic growth through strategic investment in a balanced multi-modal transportation system for people and goods. Furthermore, this project is a key part

of the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan and will simultaneously achieve MDOT's goal to *provide better transportation choices and connections*.

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

Foster Lane Extended (CSM Hughesville) – As a result of the College of Southern Maryland/Hughesville Transportation Study conducted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Transportation-Land Use Connections program, we are requesting that Foster Lane (MD 625-A) be extended to MD 231 (Prince Frederick Road). The study evaluated the recently constructed College of Southern Maryland Hughesville campus as a centrally located transfer point for the locally-operated transit services of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties. The study found that the current single point of access to the college required a limited and circuitous route, significantly impacting travel times for all 3 counties' transit services. To make this desired inter-county transfer station feasible for the counties, the study recommended the extension of Foster Lane to MD 231, paralleling the Hughesville Bypass. This roadway extension will provide significantly improved access to the College, which has planned growth for this newly established regional campus.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

Foster Lane Extended is consistent with the following 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan goals: Goal 8.5 "Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic;" Goal 8.6 "Create greater circulation through road network connectivity, both in redevelopment areas as well as in new development areas between new and existing neighborhoods;" and Goal 8.12 "Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park-and-ride facilities."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

The Foster Lane Extended project seeks to provide greater circulation in the Hughesville area of Charles County. This project would provide significant time savings for commuter traffic and enable the connection of all three locally operated transit services, greatly extending the coverage of public transit services in Southern Maryland. This project is consistent with MDOT's goals to *facilitate economic opportunity, modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system, and provide better transportation choices and connections*. This project also supports the County's continuing economic growth.

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's public transportation initiatives by increasing the availability, attractiveness, and convenience of public transportation. By facilitating the establishment of a regional transit hub, this project significantly improves the attractiveness and convenience of using the Locally Operated Transit Services in the Southern Maryland region. By creating a convenient transfer point at an important regional educational campus, this project reduces demand for single occupant vehicle trips between Charles, St Mary's, and Calvert counties.

MD 231 Corridor Improvements – As traffic continues to grow in the MD 231 corridor, we seek an analysis of potential Travel Demand Management (TDM) enhancements to ease congestion and reduce conflict points. The need for this project is identified in the SHA Highway Needs Inventory and as a recommended State highway project in the County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan (Page 8-22). Also, the MD 231 project is on the regional transportation priority list prepared by the Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee of

the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland. We understand that MD 231 is in the National Highway System. It is the only highway linking Charles County with Calvert County.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The MD 231 Corridor Improvement project is listed in the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 8-5 as Project "S-17." Specific 'Comp Plan' goals showing the project's consistency include Goal 8.2 "Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service;" and Goal 8.3 "Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan:

The MD 231 Corridor Improvements support several aspects of the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan. MD 231 provides a crossing of the Patuxent River and serves as an evacuation route for eastern Charles County and northern St. Mary's County. The requested corridor improvements will enable the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, supporting the MDOT goals to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system* and to *reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion*. These improvements will also greatly improve congestion issues created by the current roadway design. For example, the addition of auxiliary and bypass lanes will enable the heavy peak-hour traffic to continue moving without unnecessary delays caused by competing turn movements.

MD 210/MD 227 Intersection Improvements – As growth has continued in the Bryans Road area, congestion has increased. Charles County has been working with developers to make several roadway improvements to the surrounding roadway infrastructure, including the intersection of MD 210/MD 227. However, the intersection requires significant improvements that are not necessarily associated with specific developments. A comprehensive overhaul of the subject intersection is necessary to improve safety and accommodate multi-modal transportation measures, including ADA compliant facilities.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

Improving turn lanes and installing pedestrian safety enhancements at these intersections would allow the County to progress towards meeting the following "Comp Plan" goals: Goal 8.1 "Develop, maintain, and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra- County basis;" Goal 8.3 "Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development;" Goal 8.4 "Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County;" and Goal 8.14 "Support the implementation of the Charles County Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, which will provide adequate and safe recreational and functional transportation connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping, and transit centers."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This project is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan's goals to *provide better transportation choices and connections, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system, to facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion, to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, and to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity.*

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

SHA District 5 Priorities

Hughesville Improvement Project – We are requesting that MDOT SHA District 5 complete planning and design for a streetscape on MD 625 (formerly known as MD 5 Business) in Hughesville, inside the limits of the Hughesville Bypass. The County has completed a Revitalization Plan and subsequent re-zoning for the Village of Hughesville and the streetscape is a key element of the revitalization strategy. This streetscape will enhance the revitalization of the village and provide roadway and pedestrian enhancements. As part of this project, or as a separate project, the County seeks the redesign of the intersections of MD 5 (Leonardtwn Road) with Gallant Green Road and with MD 625 (MD 5 Business). This project would include the relocation of the planned Gallant Green Road/MD 5 traffic signal to the northern MD 625 terminus with MD 5, allowing Gallant Green Road traffic to utilize MD 625A (Foster Lane) to access MD 5. This project will eliminate the need for two traffic signals in the future and has received overwhelming support from both local and state elected officials and government agencies. It should be noted that the County has begun construction of a new training center and regional campus of the College of Southern Maryland adjacent to the village of Hughesville. It is expected that much of this traffic will be served by Foster Lane/MD 625A and will need to coordinate this projected traffic with SHA to ensure an appropriate traffic control design.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The Hughesville Improvement Project is an Enhancement Project listed in the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 8-5, as project "S-2." Specific 'Comp Plan' goals showing the project's consistency include Goal 8.5 "Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic" and Goal 8.8 "Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

The Hughesville Improvement Project is comprised of two components: the streetscape enhancement of MD 625 (formerly known as MD 5 Business) through the village of Hughesville and the intersection improvements at MD 5 (Leonardtwn Road) at MD 625 (northern terminus). The streetscape project is consistent with MDOT's goal to *facilitate economic opportunity* by providing the impetus to revitalize the village of Hughesville. As through traffic has been diverted outside of the village by the construction of the Hughesville Bypass, MD 625 is now better able to serve the community and act as Hughesville's "Main Street." This project will help bring a rejuvenation of economic growth to a once thriving commerce center and will spur the private investment that is greatly needed in the village of Hughesville. In addition to the streetscape improvements, the relocation of the planned MD 5/Gallant Green traffic signal to the MD 625 North intersection will provide the needed safety improvements for the Gallant Green Road travelers trying to access MD 5, while eliminating the future need for a second traffic signal and keeping travelers moving. This project is consistent with MDOT's goal to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system while also maintaining a high standard and providing better transportation choices and connections.*

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

MD 488/Radio Station Road Intersection Improvements/Traffic Control – As a related component of the local upgrade of Radio Station Road to a 4-lane boulevard design, the County is seeking to address the intersection with MD 488 (La Plata Road). With the completion of St. Charles Parkway/Rosewick Road a few years ago, traffic has been increasing on Radio Station Road. Together with traffic from the adjacent educational facility campuses along Radio Station Road, driver safety has become an increasing concern. Therefore, we are seeking State funds to assist in finalizing the design and subsequently installing a roundabout at this intersection. Design work on this project had been 95% complete before project funding was removed and MDOT SHA had completed its review of the preliminary roundabout design. With additional project funding from MDOT, the project could be fast-tracked to update the project plans (particularly the drainage and stormwater management design to meet current Maryland Department of the Environment regulations), and obtain all necessary permits for construction. We greatly appreciate the coordination efforts of the Maryland State Highway Administration to bring this project to fruition.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The MD 488/Radio Station Road Intersection Improvements are part of the transportation improvements for the Radio Station Road Improvement Project, also known as Project C-17. Specific “Comp Plan” goals showing the project’s consistency include Goal 8.2 “Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service;” and Goal 8.5 “Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

The MD 488/Radio Station Road Intersection Improvement project is consistent with the MDOT Transportation Plan goals to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system* and to *maintain a high standard* and to *improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system* by delivering intersection improvements that improve performance and support growth. These roadway improvements will also provide safety enhancements for a busy intersection frequented by school busses and student drivers.

This project is not directly connected to the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan and does not specifically support any of the stated goals of the plan. That being said, it does not seek to increase greenhouse gas emissions and in that way, is not inconsistent with the plan.

MD 6 (Charles Street) Pedestrian Safety Improvements & Community Enhancements – The Town of La Plata and the La Plata Business Association are seeking various roadway corridor improvements within the business district along MD 6 (Charles Street) in order to improve pedestrian safety and to create a more walkable environment. As traffic congestion has increased, the La Plata Town Council and the business community have raised concerns over the public being able to safely cross the roadway to homes, businesses, and the local hospital and associated facilities. We urge you to work with the Town and community members to investigate various improvements to make a safe and business-friendly roadway corridor.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The MD 6 (Charles Street) Pedestrian Safety Improvements & Community Enhancements Project is within the corporate limits of the Town of La Plata and is mentioned in support of the our mutual goals of

improving traffic safety and creating a business friendly, walkable environment for our communities. Specific “Comp Plan” goals showing the project’s consistency include Goal 8.5 “Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic;” Goal 8.8 “Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County;” and Goal 8.16 “Ensure development projects provide sidewalk, shared-use path, and trail connections to promote the expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian facility network.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

The MD 6 (Charles Street) Pedestrian Safety Improvements & Community Enhancements Project is consistent with MDOT’s goal to *facilitate economic opportunity* by limiting the obstacles to economic growth and spurring private investment in one of the significant commerce centers in the County. The needed safety improvements for the MD 6 Corridor will also expand accessibility to local businesses and services for local residents and visitors alike while keeping travelers moving. This project is consistent with MDOT’s goals to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, to modernize Maryland’s multimodal transportation system, and to provide better transportation choices and connections.*

This project supports the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan’s bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

MD 210 - Indian Head Highway Streetscape Project – This streetscape project is a critical component of the Indian Head Economic Revitalization Strategy developed by the Town of Indian Head. Charles County and the Town of Indian Head are requesting SHA’s assistance in implementing a plan for the visual enhancement of Indian Head Highway with trees and landscaping, median improvements, bicycle paths, sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly crosswalks, attractive and easily-maintained pavers, and other amenities, creating a boulevard effect along the two miles of MD 210 within the Town of Indian Head. As the gateway to the Naval Support Facility-Indian Head, the County’s largest employer, the Indian Head Highway’s visual appearance creates a first impression of the Town and the Naval base. Combined with the implementation of the other 15 priorities in this strategy, a streetscape project equal to those implemented on other Maryland highways would dramatically improve the perception of the Town and its prospects as a location for new private sector investment.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The MD 210 – Indian Head Highway Streetscape Project is within the corporate limits of the Town of Indian Head and is mentioned in support of our mutual goals of improving traffic safety and creating a business friendly, walkable environment for our communities. Specific “Comp Plan” goals showing the project’s consistency include Goal 8.4 “Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County;” and Goal 8.8 “Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

The MD 210 – Indian Head Highway Streetscape Project is consistent with MDOT’s goal to *facilitate economic opportunity* by limiting obstacles to economic growth in one of the County’s significant commerce centers. The improvements needed in the MD 210 Corridor will improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to businesses and services for local residents and visitors while supporting a much needed

component of the Town's Economic Revitalization Strategy. This project is consistent with MDOT's goal to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system.*

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Increased service in the Waldorf/St. Charles urban area – We request funding to allow for expanded operations of the VanGo locally-operated transit service within Charles County's urban area that will increase the frequency of service on high capacity routes during the peak periods of the operating day. As population has increased, many of the routes are operating at capacity. Adding additional buses to existing high capacity routes will increase the frequency of service, reduce high passenger loads, and improve the convenience of public transit. Also, Charles County is experiencing rapidly escalating demand for specialized transportation that is compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act and additional funding is critical for adequately meeting the demand for this important mode of transportation.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

Our Locally Operated Transit Service, known as VanGo, has seen dramatic increases in ridership and has become the primary mode of transportation for many individuals and families. Our request for funding to increase service in the Waldorf/St. Charles Area is consistent with the goals of the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan. Specific goals include Goal 8.8 "Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County" and Goal 8.12 "Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

By improving residents' accessibility to residential, commercial, and institutional destinations, this request is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan goals to *facilitate economic opportunity, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system, to improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system to enhance the customer experience, and to provide better transportation choices and connections.*

This project supports the goals of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's public transportation initiatives by increasing the availability, attractiveness, and convenience of public transportation. By increasing transit service in the County's most populous area, this project would increase the attractiveness and convenience of using the County's Locally Operated Transit Service, which would in turn reduce the demand for single occupant vehicle trips.

Local Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility – The Charles County Department of Planning & Growth Management has nearly completed Phase II of a project that will ultimately result in the construction of a local transit operations and maintenance facility. This County-owned facility will act as a turnkey facility from which a transit contractor will house their operations and maintenance functions. The establishment of such a facility will enhance competition when transit services are put out to bid and will significantly reduce the real estate costs reflected in contracted operational rates. Over time, operational

savings will more than offset the capital costs of this project. We request funding following this phase to begin engineering in FY2020 and construction in FY2023.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The Local Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility request is consistent with the Charles County Comprehensive Plan to reduce vehicle trips, relieve congestion and increase transit use. The following specific County Transportation Goals illustrate the compliance and consistency of this project: Goal 8.8 “Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County;” and Goal “8.12 Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This project is consistent with the Maryland Transportation Plan as it supports the stated goals to *provide better transportation choices and connections, to promote fiscal responsibility, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland’s multimodal transportation system, to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity, and to improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system to enhance the customer experience.* This project accomplishes these goals by providing multi-modal transportation options, by preserving existing roadway capacity, and by improving air quality by reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicle trips.

This project supports the goals of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan’s public transportation initiatives by increasing the availability, attractiveness, and convenience of public transportation. By increasing transit service in the County’s most populous area, this project would increase the attractiveness and convenience of using the County’s Locally Operated Transit Service, which would in turn reduce the demand for single occupant vehicle trips.

Park & Ride Implementation – We request that MTA continue to implement the recommendations of the “MD 5/ US 301/ MD 228 Corridors Park and Ride Feasibility Study-Site Identification Report,” published in October 2001. This report identifies locations for new park and ride facilities. New facilities in proximity to proposed transit stations and existing rail lines within Charles County are necessary to meet the growing demand for VanGO and MTA Commuter Bus service parking. As part of the urban redevelopment of Waldorf, the County will be seeking future park and ride locations within the Old Washington Road Corridor that are oriented along the planned fixed-route transit corridor. Charles County is also continuing to work with the developers of the “Waldorf Crossing” Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project in the northern portion of Waldorf, in order to secure additional park and ride sites within the property. A portion of this site is also planned to serve as a future light rail station. The County therefore seeks to partner with MTA to site and construct park and ride facilities within the rail corridor.

The “Phase One” development plan for Waldorf Center, in the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC), includes a new 540-space MTA Commuter Bus Park & Ride lot, which would function as the transit component of the TOD at this location until Waldorf has a high-capacity, fixed-route transit connection. The County is taking steps to implement the plan and secure the property necessary for the proposed Park & Ride lot. A commitment by MDOT to construct this new Park & Ride lot after the land is secured would help expedite the project.

In addition to the Park & Ride lots mentioned in the above paragraphs, the County is also requesting that MDOT examine potential locations for a new Park & Ride lot that could address the capacity issues at the Accokeek Park & Ride Lot. The Accokeek Park & Ride located near the intersection of MD 210 and MD 373 (Livingston Road) is served by MTA Commuter Bus Routes 640 and 650 and is routinely filled to capacity. Although this Park & Ride is located in Prince George's County, many Charles County residents who live in the western portion of the County use this lot for their commuting needs. Given the capacity limitations of this lot, and the associated negative impacts on Commuter Bus ridership, the County is requesting that MDOT evaluate additional locations for Park & Ride lots that could relieve some of the stress placed on this lot, in particular.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The implementation of MDOT's Park and Ride Study Report enables the County to integrate land use and transportation infrastructure, focused on transit services. The following Comprehensive Plan goals illustrate this project's consistency: Goal 8.7 "Concentrate 75% of residential development in the Development District which includes development density and intensity in mixed use districts in the Transit Corridor to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation;" Goal 8.8 "Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County;" and Goal 8.12 "Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This request is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan's goals to *provide better transportation choices and connections, to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system, and to facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion.* The project will achieve these goals by improving the ease of access to transit services and by maximizing the operational performance and efficiency of the existing highway system through reductions in the number of single-occupancy vehicles on the highway network.

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's public transportation initiatives by increasing the availability, attractiveness, and convenience of public transportation. By making it easier for residents to use the MTA Commuter Bus service, this project will reduce vehicle miles traveled and increase Commuter Bus ridership.

Commuter Bus Enhancements – To compliment the County's first transportation priority (the completion of project planning activities for the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit service), we are also interested in making interim improvements to the MTA Commuter Bus service that connects County residents to job centers in Washington, DC and Prince George's County. With the understanding that the Project Planning, Engineering, Right-of-Way, and Construction phases of the SMRT project will take time, the County would like MDOT to examine the possibility of installing queue jump lanes, transit signal priority, and other supporting operational measures along the MD 5/US 301 corridor as well as the MD 210 corridor. These service improvements would reduce travel times on commuter bus routes, improve the reliability of the service, and further incentivize commuters to ride transit. Heavy peak hour congestion is a daily reality for County residents. Improving travel times for commuter bus routes and allowing buses to avoid the major delays associated with congestion would provide interim relief for commuters while SMRT is in design and construction.

The County is not interested in substituting commuter bus enhancements (queue jump lanes, transit signal priority, etc.) for the delivery of the SMRT service. SMRT is a critical component of the County's land use plan and vision for the redevelopment of Waldorf. Nonetheless, the necessary time needed to design and construct SMRT would mean that commuters would still be forced to travel in congestion once project planning begins. Given the quality of life impacts of peak hour congestion on County residents, the County would like MDOT to examine ways to speed up commuter bus routes so that commuters spend less time commuting and more time with their families and loved ones.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The Commuter Bus Enhancements request is consistent with the Charles County Comprehensive Plan's goals to reduce vehicle trips, relieve congestion, and increase transit use. The following specific "Comp Plan" goals illustrate the compliance and consistency of this project: Goal 8.7 "Concentrate 75% of residential development in the Development District which includes development density and intensity in mixed use districts in the Transit Corridor to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation;" and Goal 8.12 "Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This project is consistent with the Maryland Transportation Plan as it supports the ability of the MTA Commuter Bus service to *facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system, to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity, and to provide better transportation choices and connections.* This project seeks to achieve these goals by providing multi-modal transportation options, by preserving existing roadway capacity, and by improving air quality by reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicles.

This project supports the goals of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan's public transportation initiatives by increasing the availability, attractiveness, and convenience of public transportation. By improving commuter bus service between the County's most populous area and the major job centers in the region, this project would increase the attractiveness and convenience of using commuter bus, which would in turn reduce the demand for single occupant vehicle trips.

Capacity/TDM Analysis for MD 231 Corridor and US 301 between Smallwood Drive and MD 227 –

Building on previous transportation priorities that were not funded, the County is requesting that MDOT perform capacity and travel demand management analysis on MD 231 between Hughesville and the Calvert County line and on US 301 between Smallwood Drive and MD 227. MD 231 serves as a critical link between Charles and Calvert Counties and has been the subject of previous regional planning efforts. MD 231 corridor improvements were identified as a regional priority by the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland but to-date, there has been little progress made on determining what, if any, corridor improvements are necessary or desirable for Charles and Calvert County residents. In order to better understand the status of the highway's operations and to determine the need for corridor improvements, the County is requesting that MDOT analyze the number of vehicle trips taken on this highway, the performance of intersections along this highway, the demand for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, and the safety and condition of the highway, among other aspects of the roadway. The section of US 301 between Smallwood Drive and MD 227 is a heavily traveled section of roadway that has similarly been the

subject of previous years' priority letters. Peak-hour traffic has been cited as an issue along this section of roadway, yet the County's planned road improvements on Middletown Road between Billingsley Road and MD 227 and on Turkey Hill Road between MD 227 and US 301 may alleviate the observed peak-hour congestion issues. To avoid unnecessary capital expenditures, the County is requesting that MDOT examine the congestion issues along this section of road, the number of vehicle trips on this section, the performance of intersections on this link, the demand for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, and the safety and condition of the highway. These two analysis projects will thus provide MDOT with the needed information to determine the demand for corridor improvements and assist the Department in allocating limited resources in the future.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The MD 231 and US 301 Capacity/Travel Demand Analysis projects are consistent with the following "Comp Plan" goals: Goal 8.1 "Develop, maintain, and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra- County basis," Goal 8.2 "Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service," Goal 8.3 "Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development;" Goal 8.4 "Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County."

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan:

This project is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan's goals to *ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, to facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion, to provide better transportation choices and connections, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland's multimodal transportation system, to improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system to enhance the customer experience, and to promote fiscal responsibility.* Understanding the current performance and constraints of highway facilities is an integral aspect of highway preservation. Also, in order to make informed decisions about where to direct limited funds, agencies must know whether or not roadways are performing adequately and subsequently determine what changes must be made to mitigate any identified issues. Performing these capacity/travel demand analyses on these roadways will provide MDOT with the necessary information to make such determinations. In addition, these analyses will illuminate safety issues that must be addressed. These studies, therefore, serve to achieve a variety of the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan's goals while simultaneously assisting the County in understanding the constraints of its transportation network.

Restoration of WMATA Route W-19 or Effective Alternative Service – As part of major WMATA Metrobus service reductions in July 2017, WMATA's W-19 route between the Town of Indian Head in Charles County and the Southern Avenue Metrorail station was eliminated, severing a vital link and bi-directional transit connection between Charles County and the Metrorail system. As a result, the MD Route 210 corridor in Charles County is now served by MTA Commuter Bus routes 640 and 650, with no connections offered to the Metrorail system prior to the L'Enfant Plaza Station adjacent to the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The considerable gap in public transit options for people who live in, work in, or wish to visit the western portion of Charles County or the Town of Indian Head is a limiting factor for this area's economic development and poses challenges for the transportation network in light of the Naval Support Facility Indian Head's imminent expansion. In addition, the service elimination has placed added strain on the MTA Commuter Bus routes that serve this area. The County is therefore requesting that MTA appropriate funding

to restore the W-19 bus route or to establish some type of effective alternative service. Such a service restoration would meet the demand for transit service in this area while simultaneously alleviating the overcapacity issues on MTA Commuter Bus routes 640 and 650.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The restoration of WMATA Route W-19 is consistent with the following 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan goals: Goal 8.1 “Develop, maintain and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra-County basis;” Goal 8.8 “Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County;” and Goal 8.12 “Support local, regional, and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan:

This project is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan’s goals to *provide better transportation choices and connections, to modernize Maryland’s multimodal transportation system, to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity, to facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion, to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, and to improve the quality and efficiency of the transportation system to enhance the customer experience.* By restoring transit service to this area, residents, employees, and visitors will have more transportation choices and connections to the region’s transit systems while also replacing a vital link in the State’s multimodal transportation system. In addition, the service expansion would facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in response to the imminent expansion of jobs located at Naval Support Facility Indian Head. Restoring transit service to this area would also enhance the safety and the reliability of the transportation system while also improving its quality and efficiency.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SECRETARY’S OFFICE

Design of Indian Head Rail Trail – Three Notch Trail Connection – We are requesting that MDOT award Maryland Bikeways Program grant funding in FY22 to Charles County for design work on the trail connection between the Indian Head Rail Trail and the Three Notch Trail. These two shared-use trails are tremendous transportation and recreational assets that facilitate safe bicycling and walking in Charles and St. Mary’s Counties. Connecting these two trails would enhance the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity of Charles and St. Mary’s Counties, expand the reach of the National Capital Trail system, and provide a high-quality transportation and recreation option to Southern Maryland residents. In addition, this trail connection would promote economic development by bringing additional visitors to the Hughesville area and by providing a nonmotorized transportation connection between the communities of Charles and St. Mary’s Counties.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan:

The Indian Head Rail Trail – Three Notch Trail Connection Feasibility Study would allow the County to progress towards meeting the following “Comp Plan” goals: Goal 8.1 “Develop, maintain, and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra- County basis;” Goal 8.3 “Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development;” Goal 8.4 “Provide the public with adequate

transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County;” and Goal 8.14 “Support the implementation of the Charles County Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, which will provide adequate and safe recreational and functional transportation connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping, and transit centers.”

Consistency with the 2040 MDOT Transportation Plan and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan:

This project is consistent with the 2040 Maryland Transportation Plan’s goals to *provide better transportation choices and connections, to maintain a high standard and modernize Maryland’s multimodal transportation system, to facilitate economic opportunity and reduce congestion in Maryland through strategic system expansion, to ensure a safe, secure, and resilient transportation system, and to ensure environmental protection and sensitivity.* By providing a safe link between existing high-quality shared-use trails, this project will enhance the connectivity of the County’s bicycle and pedestrian network, make it possible for residents to safely travel between economic centers of the County by walking or bicycling, and reduce the demand for vehicle trips. In addition, connecting the communities of Hughesville, Charlotte Hall, and White Plains will draw additional visitors and provide opportunities for economic development in these areas.

This project supports the goals of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan’s bicycle and pedestrian initiatives by providing alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

ADDITIONAL PROJECT REQUESTS FROM THE TOWN OF LA PLATA

The following projects are additional requests from the incorporated Town of La Plata, by roadway:

Charles Street (MD 6):

- Pedestrian Safety – Restriping crosswalks and consideration of adding electronic warning signs
- Request for a Comprehensive Study Rt. 301 (Crain Hwy) to Rt. 488 (La Plata Rd.);
- Request for review of safety upgrades to the intersection with Hickory Lane
- Storm water structure deterioration and related road conditions
- Left turn signal to Garrett Avenue (hospital and library entrance)
- Tweak the timing of Garrett Avenue and La Plata Road/488 Light (try to sync).

Crain Highway (US 301):

- Standing water in front of 6720 creates a potential hazard;
- Hawthorne Road intersection – Poor visibility, light timing and traffic pattern review is needed
- Request to plant thorny bushes in the median on 301 to deter pedestrians from crossing there to get to Deluxe Inn and to Patuxent Inn

La Plata Road (MD 488):

- Request for consideration of installation of Hiker/Biker trail
- Request for review of crosswalk to neighboring pedestrian path to Tilghman Lake Park
- Request for review of safety issues at Kings Grant entrance