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GARY V. HODGE



PAUL W. COMFORT  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

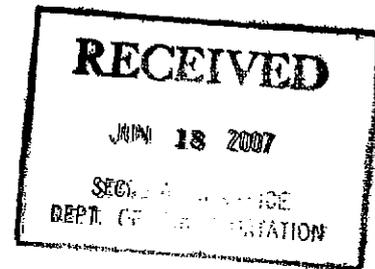
JOYCE A. SCHMIDT  
CHIEF OF STAFF

## County Commissioners of Charles County

P.O. BOX 2150\*LA PLATA, MARYLAND 20646  
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May 30, 2007

The Honorable John D. Porcari  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
P.O. Box 548 Mail Stop 200  
Hanover, Maryland 21076



Dear Secretary Porcari:

The Charles County Commissioners have been working with staff and State Highway Administration officials to prioritize the County's long-range transportation needs and create a coordinated land use/transportation strategy. To that end, our highest overall transportation priorities are the development of coordinated highway and transit improvements that will alleviate present and future traffic congestion problems on the U.S. Highway 301 corridor through the Waldorf Urban Core. Our long-range comprehensive and sub-area plans for Waldorf encourage the development of higher density, compact land development patterns that will support alternative modes of transportation, including pedestrian ways, bicycle, and public transit (bus and rail). Consequently, the Commissioners wish to promote a multi-faceted approach, coordinating our highest transportation priorities in a comprehensive, integrated and concurrent strategy that will address our transportation needs for the next generation.

Our highest transportation priorities are the construction of a Western Bypass of Waldorf in conjunction with a limited upgrade of existing U.S. Route 301 to alleviate local traffic congestion at the most critical (failing) intersections, and the implementation of graduated transit service enhancements and improvements culminating in the establishment of a rail transit system from White Plains and Waldorf to the Branch Avenue METRO station. Through the ongoing implementation of our long-range plans, we are working to encourage land development patterns that will support and complement our priority transportation improvement needs. Our planned residential and commercial development densities have been designed to support future rail transit, as well as other alternative modes, including pedestrian and bicycle. The Commissioners request your commitment to these transportation system improvements.



CHARLES COUNTY MARYLAND  
Where Eagles Fly

SAY NO TO DRUGS ~ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY COUNTY



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In addition to our top priorities, which have been endorsed by the Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, we have attached a list of additional supporting transportation projects and improvements that are needed to facilitate the ongoing implementation of our long-range comprehensive and sub-area plans. These additional needs are divided into categories based on the respective transportation divisions that oversee these activities. Attached is the list of the County's additional CTP priorities for the upcoming year.

Once again, thank you for your continued cooperation and we look forward to working with you and your staff. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. David Umling, Planning Director, at 301-645-0540 or E-Mail, [umlingd@charlescounty.org](mailto:umlingd@charlescounty.org).

Very Truly,

CHARLES COUNTY DELEGATION  
TO THE MARYLAND GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Thomas M. Middleton  
Senator, District 28



Sally Jameson  
Delegate, District 28

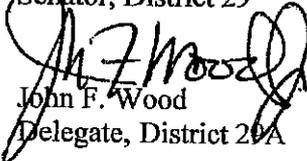


Murray D. Levy  
Delegate, District 28

Peter Murphy  
Delegate, District 28



Roy Dyson  
Senator, District 29



John F. Wood  
Delegate, District 20A

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF CHARLES COUNTY,  
MARYLAND



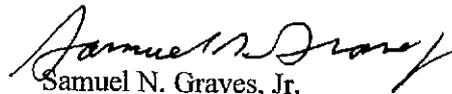
Wayne Cooper, President



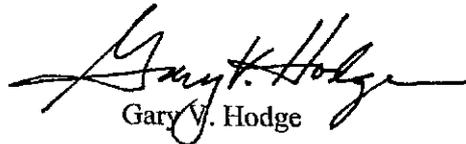
Edith J. Patterson, Vice President



Reuben B. Collins, II



Samuel N. Graves, Jr.



Gary V. Hodge

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**Attachment**

*cc: Mr. Neil Pedersen, SHA  
Mr. Anthony Chinyere, Tri-County Council  
Mr. Roy Hancock, Charles County  
Mr. Chuck Beall, Charles County  
Mr. David Umling, Charles County  
Mr. Jason Groth, Charles County  
Ms. Lisa Quill, Charles County  
Mayor Gene Ambrogio, Town of La Plata  
Mr. Joseph Norris, Town of La Plata  
Mayor Edward Rice, Town of Indian Head  
Mr. Ryan Hicks, Town of Indian Head*

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**Additional Priority Transportation Improvement Projects**

**STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

**Project Planning Priorities**

1. Initiate a project planning study for the Maryland Route 6 Connector in the Town of La Plata, now that SHA has completed its feasibility study for this project. This roadway would connect existing MD 6 at Willow Lane to US 301, providing additional congestion relief within the Town of La Plata. This project is identified in the US 301 Transportation Study Task Force's Final Report, supported by the US 301 Policy Oversight Committee and included in the US 301 Southern Corridor Study. The Maryland Route 6 Connector project has been placed as the County's top project planning study with the understanding that the U.S. Route 301 Waldorf Transportation Project (Waldorf Upgrade/Bypass), is already funded and included in the CTP program.
2. In coordination with Calvert County, we seek the widening of MD 231 to ease increasing levels of congestion. The need for this project is identified as a recommended state highway project in the County's 2006 Comprehensive Plan (Page 5-18). Also, the Maryland 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.
3. One of the implementation strategies for the 2001 Bryans Road/Indian Head Sub-Area Plan is the development of a new "Town Common" in the vicinity of MD Route 227 and Matthews Road to serve as the centerpiece of a proposed pedestrian-friendly town center for the Bryans Road community. Additional improvements include streetscape enhancements to MD Route 210 within the proposed Town Center. The County is seeking assistance with planning and implementation for this project, both in terms of technical design assistance and project funding.

**SHA District 5 Priorities**

4. Complete planning and design for a streetscape on MD 5 Hughesville, inside the limits of the Hughesville Bypass. The County has completed a draft Revitalization Plan 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.
5. Traffic congestion along Leonardtown Road (MD Business Route 5) between U.S. Route 301 and Post Office Road continues to inhibit the efficient movement of vehicles through this section of highway. Gridlock conditions occur during peak hours in this area. We request a re-evaluation of the turning movement queues at the U.S. Route 301

intersection to better coordinate traffic flows onto eastbound (southeast) Leonardtown Road. Eastbound traffic regularly backs up into the U.S. Route 301 intersection. We also ask that you re-evaluate the traffic signal timing synchronization of the traffic signals between Post Office Road and U.S. Route 301 to ensure maximum efficiency of traffic flows through these intersections.

Also, we request that you pursue the addition of a turn lane from west-bound MD 5 (Business) onto northbound MD 925 (Old Washington Road). The property on this corner is currently vacant and would provide a much needed turn lane, further alleviating congestion at Leonardtown Road and Old Washington Road.

6. An additional travel lane is needed, in each direction, to relieve increasing congestion along US 301 from south of Smallwood Drive to south of MD 227. The taper of the 6-lane section of US 301 to 4 lanes south of Smallwood Drive creates increasing back-ups during peak and certain off-peak hours. Evaluation of the synchronization of the four US 301 traffic signals in White Plains may also reduce congestion. These intersections are Billingsley Road, DeMarr Road, Theodore Green Boulevard, and MD 227.

#### **MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MdTA)**

7. An expansion of the Governor Harry Nice Bridge is necessary to facilitate the flow of traffic at the toll facilities and improve access from Maryland to Virginia. This bridge is a major limiting factor in the path of evacuation from Southern Maryland and the Washington D.C. area to points south. In the event of a natural disaster or a Homeland Security incident, this bridge would create a major bottleneck, with its capacity currently limited to two lanes. The County's 2006 Comprehensive Plan recommends increasing the capacity of the bridge to improve traffic flow, alleviate congestion, and provide an evacuation route of greater capacity. We support the current study of this bridge being undertaken by MdTA. We look forward to the completion of the study and the selection of an alternative for construction.

#### **MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

8. The County continues to seek funding for a transfer station for the County's VanGO service at the US 301/Smallwood Drive Park and Ride facility. The transfer pavilion would facilitate transfer operations for the local transit system, minimizing confusion for passengers and providing an area for informational services and convenience facilities for drivers. Additionally, the segregation of local transfer operations from park and ride vehicles will improve safety and coordination between the two transit systems. We also continue seek an increase of State funding to sustain existing operations and evaluate the possible conversion of the service to an in-house operation.

9. Provide funding for new VanGo service in the Indian Head/Bryans Road area. Additional service frequency and coverage is required to minimize ride durations and make public transit a feasible alternative for individuals without access to an automobile who are seeking employment and transportation to work.

10. Provide funding for GPS systems on the VanGo transit vehicles to help track and monitor operations and increase the system's responsiveness to passengers.
11. Continue to implement the recommendations of the *MD 5/ US301/ MD228 Corridors Park and Ride Feasibility Study-Site Identification report, 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 commuter bus service parking. In an effort to secure additional Park and Ride Facilities, Charles County has secured additional Park and Ride lots through the recent approval of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zone in the northern portion of Waldorf fronting US 301. This site may also serve as a future rail transit stop. We continue to seek additional parking facilities for our growing commuter bus services, as well as potential future rail stop locations.
12. Charles County seeks the accelerated implementation of MTA's "Transit Service Staging Plan" and the identification of a transit alignment in the MD 5/US 301 corridor, followed by the preservation of right-of-way in the delineated transit corridor. This plan, as well as previous studies, including the Southern Maryland Mass Transportation Alternatives Study and the US 301 Task Force Final Report, all supported the implementation of mass transit alternatives. These alternatives include rail transit in the MD 5/US 301 corridor from White Plains to the Branch Avenue METRO Station. The Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland has identified this project as a top regional priority. We support rail transit as a long-standing priority of the County and the region, and look forward to working with MTA to implement transit solutions for Charles County and Southern Maryland.
13. With the construction of the new multi-purpose stadium/entertainment complex on Piney Church Road, the County has begun coordination efforts with MTA's Office of Planning, regarding the dual use of a portion of the parking lot of the stadium complex as a State Park and Ride facility. The site is ideally located near the Cross County Connector (Billingsley Road) between MD 5 and US 301, in the Waldorf-St. Charles area, and the area adjacent to the stadium is approved for future residential development as part of the St. Charles Community. We request that MTA participate in funding construction of a minimum 500 of the 2,000 parking lot spaces at the stadium complex for dual use as a State Park and Ride facility.