

February 28, 2012

The Honorable Beverley K. Swaim-Staley
Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
P.O. Box 548, Mail Stop 200
Hanover, MD 21076

Dear Secretary Swaim-Staley:

We appreciate the opportunity to present Charles County's transportation priorities for fiscal year 2013, in anticipation of our annual tour meeting with you this fall. Throughout the last year, we have continued to work closely with the individual modal administrations under the Maryland Department of Transportation, and with our elected colleagues from neighboring jurisdictions, and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, to address our significant regional priorities.

As you may recall from our previous meetings and discussions, the highest transportation priority for Charles County is the creation of a fixed-route, high-capacity transit service (Light Rail) from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. We are seeking the inclusion of this transit project in the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), which includes funding for Project Planning, so that we may continue the momentum of the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study. You may recall our presentation on this project request during your 2011 Tour, which included the County's adoption of the preferred alignment, our recent 300-acre re-zoning to transit oriented/mixed use development along the rail corridor, as well as our commitment for the local-share of funding for this next phase of the project. We have also been working closely with the Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker, as well as the staff of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation, whom all have shown great support and cooperation on this planned transportation project. In November of 2011, the Prince George's County Council also signed a Resolution to declare this project as a transportation priority for their County and their renewed commitment to high-capacity transit and the associated land-uses to create the needed ridership. To enhance this regional support, the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland also designated this project as the number one regional transit priority for Southern Maryland. This project has further been supported by Senator Benjamin Cardin in his letter to you on October 31, 2011, which also details his efforts to bring federal funding for this project to fruition.

Secretary Swaim-Staley
February 28, 2012

Our second top priority for inclusion in Maryland's CTP is the construction of a controlled access highway option for US 301 through Waldorf and White Plains, which balances the needs of the residential and business communities, while minimizing the impacts to cultural, social, and natural resources. We believe it is important to maintain the roadway mobility of our inter-state and inter-county highway system. The US 301 and MD 5 corridor through Charles and Prince George's Counties remains one of the most congested areas in the state. We fully support the efforts of Prince George's County to improve the remainder of MD 5 (Branch Avenue) from Surratt's Road to the junction with US 301, which will greatly improve the severe delays experienced along this corridor. We believe these improvements should be completed in tandem with the US 301 Corridor improvements. In the interim of these major improvements, we specifically request that the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) accelerate potential break-out projects to improve roadway congestion within this corridor. These projects are listed in "*Attachment 1*" under SHA Project Planning Project number "1" and District Special Project number "1." We look forward to working with the SHA staff on these projects of great importance for our citizens.

The Light Rail Project and the US 301 Corridor Project continue to be the top priority transportation projects of Charles County, and have been endorsed by the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland and the Commission to Study Southern Maryland Transportation Needs. We believe that high-capacity transit service to the Washington D.C. metropolitan area is essential to preserving highway capacity in the region and bringing Governor O'Malley's goals of transit oriented development to fruition. It is also essential that we continue to preserve and plan for future highway capacity as transit will not serve all travelers within our County and Southern Maryland who do not have destinations served by fixed route 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 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 which will significantly reduce vehicle trips by providing the necessary mix of land uses in walkable-bikable environment. 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. Our planned residential and commercial development densities have been designed to support future rail transit, as well as other alternative modes, including pedestrians and bicycles. These densities are consistent with the Federal Transit Administration's *Guidelines and Standards for Transit Supportive Land Uses* in an effort to qualify for "*New Start*" or "*Small Start*" 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. Our overall priorities remain the same as in the past years; however, based on the recent guidance information received from your administration, we have re-prioritized certain projects based on the current local and regional needs. The Charles County Commissioners conducted a comprehensive review of our transportation needs, resulting in the attached transportation priorities.

Secretary Swaim-Staley
February 28, 2012

In closing, we would also like to share our continued appreciation for the outstanding study document produced by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and their consultants regarding the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study. Our staff has worked closely with MTA and Prince George's County to ensure that we have the tools we need to bring high capacity public transit to Waldorf-White Plains, and preserve the land needed to the corridor. We have integrated the Study's preferred alignment corridor into our Comprehensive Plan Update, and will maintain that alignment as an integral part of our land use plan as we complete the update of our Plan, currently under development.

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 Mr. Peter Aluotto, Director of the Department of Planning & Growth Management by calling (301) 645-0693, or by E-Mail to AluottoP@charlescounty.org.

Very Truly,

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

Candice Quinn Kelly, *President*

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

Ken Robinson

Debra M. Davis, Esq.

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Attachment

cc: Mr. Darrell B. Mobley, SHA
Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld, MTA
Mr. Glen Smith, MdTA
Mr. Wayne Clark, Tri-County Council
Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, Charles County
Mr. Roy Hancock, Charles County
Mr. Peter Aluotto, Charles County

Mr. Gregory Slater, SHA
Mayor Roy Hale, Town of La Plata
Mr. Daniel Mears, Town of La Plata
Mayor Edward Rice, Town of Indian Head
Mr. Ryan Hicks, Town of Indian Head
Mr. Jeffry Barnett, Charles County
Mr. Jason Groth, Charles County

ATTACHMENT 1

Top Priority Transportation Improvement Projects

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

1. 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 creation of a fixed-route, high-capacity transit service (Light Rail) from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. We are seeking the inclusion of this transit project in the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), which includes funding for Project Planning, so that we may continue the momentum of the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study. This project is necessary to create the transit component of the planned transit oriented Town Centers in the Waldorf Corridor, increasing mobility for our citizens, and helping to ease congestion in the region.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Project is consistent with the goals of the 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan. Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals include: Goal 5.6 Concentrate development density and intensity in mixed use districts and in the Urban Core to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation; Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan. Goal 5.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County; Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers; Goal 5.11 Adopt land use and transportation policies and capital investment strategies designed to increase the share of trips handled by transit; and, Goal 5.13 Provide incentives that encourage commuters to switch to higher occupancy alternatives.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This project is consistent with several of the goals of the Maryland Transportation Plan. Specifically, the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Project seeks to improve the *Quality of Transportation Service* by enhancing access to transit service for citizens of both our County, and the surrounding Counties. The expansion of transit service to our region will provide the necessary services as our workforce continues to rapidly grow, as seen by our commuter bus ridership numbers. This investment will ensure major strides in Maryland’s efforts toward *Environmental Stewardship*. Not only does this high capacity transit project have the greatest impact in improving air quality by dramatically reducing vehicle emissions, it is also considered to be the greatest transportation initiative to create high-density, compact development to promote the State’s Smart Growth Policies. Finally, this project is also a catalyst to create and support economic growth through the “strategic investment in a balanced multi-modal transportation system for people and goods.” Such a transit service will provide the necessary *Connectivity to Daily Life* as the Maryland Transportation Plan seeks to promote.

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

2. US 301 Corridor Waldorf Improvements (Upgrade or Bypass)

As previously stated in this letter, the US 301 Corridor Improvements in Waldorf remain a top priority for Charles County. As congestion in the region continues to rise, the MD 5 (Branch Avenue) and US 301

corridors continue to carry the largest volume of vehicles in Southern Maryland. While our primary project is high capacity transit, it is understood that transit services do not serve all destinations. This corridor is also experiencing substantial increases in truck traffic as 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.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The US 301 Corridor Waldorf Improvement Project is consistent with the 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan and is listed in Table 5-4 as State Project “A-S-1.” Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include: Goal 5.1 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service; Goal 5.2 Direct the highway program toward the preservation of peak period capacities at acceptable levels along arterials such as US 301, MD 210, MD 228, and MD 5 through the careful application of access management and the development of a supporting network to separate local traffic; and, Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The US 301 Corridor Improvements would significantly improve the *Safety & Security* of the Southern Maryland Highway System. As the Harry W. Nice Bridge is the southern-most crossing of the Potomac River to points south, US 301 is a primary route for evacuation of Washington D.C. and the surrounding area. As truck traffic and commuter traffic has continued to increase, the requested capacity and enhancement improvements will greatly assist in moving people out of the area in the occurrence of a national security event. These roadway improvements are also consistent with MDOT’s strategy for *System Preservation* goals and objectives 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 toward *Environmental Stewardship*, by having a positive effect on air quality through easing congestion and substantially reducing vehicle idle time in traffic. This becomes especially important as the truck traffic increases and further compounds the issues of non-attainment of air quality standards in the Washington D.C. region.

Additional Priority Transportation Improvement Projects

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Project Planning Priorities

3. 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 improve 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. We also request that SHA extend an additional travel lane in each direction of US 301 from Smallwood Drive to MD 227 to relieve morning and evening peak hour congestion. Cumulatively, these improvements will greatly improve the traffic flow in the areas of highest volume and provide needed highway capacity.

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 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan and is listed in Table 5-4 as State Project

“A-S-1.” Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include: Goal 5.1 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service; Goal 5.2 Direct the highway program toward the preservation of peak period capacities at acceptable levels along arterials such as US 301, MD 210, MD 228, and MD 5 through the careful application of access management and the development of a supporting network to separate local traffic; and, Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The US 301 Corridor Improvements would be consistent with MDOT’s strategy for *System Preservation* goals and objectives by maximizing the use of the existing roadway infrastructure and improving the overall performance of the facilities. Further, the requested corridor enhancements will further Maryland’s efforts toward *Environmental Stewardship*, 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 improvement are of increasing importance as the truck traffic increases and continues to impact the issues of non-attainment for air quality standards in the Washington D.C. region.

4. MD 5 Bus./MD 925 Corridor Improvements – In concert with the County’s Waldorf Urban Area, we are requesting roadway improvements along MD 5 Business and MD 925 within the new Urban Zoning District. Consistent with the Waldorf Urban Design Guidelines and the County’s Urban Road Standards, we seek to reconstruct these roads ways as Urban Arterials with bicycle and pedestrian accommodations to assist the County in creating the planned walkable, transit-oriented community. This project would consist of improvements to the intersection of MD 5 Bus., MD 925, and Old Washington Road, including ADA compliant crosswalks and sidewalks, roadway widening, capacity enhancements, turn lanes, signal reconstruction, and stormwater management improvements. These improvements will dovetail into the County’s planned improvements along Old Washington Road to the north. To bring these improvements to fruition, 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 5.1 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service; and, Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic. Since this project works toward the planned improvements in the Waldorf Sub-Area/Urban Design Area, the project is specifically consistent with the following Transportation-Land Use Goals of the County’s Comprehensive Plan: Goal 5.6 Concentrate development density and intensity in mixed use districts and in the Urban Core to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation; Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to, and support the overall land use plan; Goal 5.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County; and, Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The MD 5 Bus./MD 925 Corridor Improvements would be consistent with MDOT’s strategy for *System Preservation* goals and objectives by maximizing the use of the existing roadway infrastructure and improving the overall performance of the facilities. This project also seeks to further enhance Maryland’s efforts to create and support economic growth through the “strategic investment in a balanced multi-modal transportation system for people and goods.” This project is a key part of the Waldorf Sub-Area and new urban high-density zoning which strives to provide the necessary *Connectivity to Daily Life* as the Maryland Transportation Plan seeks to promote.

5. MD 6 Connector - Initiate a project planning study for the Maryland Route 6 Connector in the Town of La Plata, consistent with the completed SHA feasibility study for this project. This roadway would connect existing MD 6 at Willow Lane to U.S. 301, providing additional congestion relief within the Town of La Plata. This project is identified in the U.S. 301 Transportation Study Task Force's Final Report, supported by the U.S. 301 Policy Oversight Committee and included in the ongoing U.S. 301 South Corridor Study. The Maryland Route 6 Connector project is not listed in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) as there is no funding for the project at the present time, and we are requesting those funds from MDOT for the Project Planning phase.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The MD 6 Connector is consistent with the 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan and listed in Table 5-4 as Town of La Plata Project "L-P-1." Specific 'Comp Plan' goals showing the project's consistency include: Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic; Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan; and, Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The MD 6 Connector project seeks to provide greater circulation in the La Plata area of Charles County. As MD 6 has become increasingly congested in downtown La Plata, this project would provide a bypass for travelers seeking access to US 301 north of the town. This project is consistent with MDOT's goal to provide *Connectivity to Daily Life* which supports La Plata's continuing economic growth, with significant recent investment by private corporations. By relieving congestion in the La Plata area, this area may continue its revitalization efforts and create an economic base to encourage a reverse commute pattern and balance the jobs to households.

6. MD 231 Corridor Improvements - In coordination with Calvert County, we seek the enhancement of capacity and associated corridor improvements of MD 231 to ease increasing levels of congestion. The need for this project is identified in the SHA Highway Needs Inventory and as a recommended State highway project in the County's 2006 Comprehensive Plan (Page 5-18). 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 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 5-4 as Project "L-S-14." Specific 'Comp Plan' goals showing the project's consistency include: Goal 5.1 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service; and, Goal 5.10 Limit transportation improvements in Rural Conservation and Agricultural Preservation Districts to essential capacity improvements as well as maintenance and upgrading of nonstandard roads and under-capacity bridges. This objective will provide for a safe and functional road system while limiting development in these rural areas.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The MD 231 Corridor Improvements support several aspects of the MDOT Transportation Plan. As MD 231 provides a crossing of the Patuxent River, it serves as an evacuation route for eastern Charles County and northern St. Mary's County. The requested corridor improvements will enable safe and efficient movement of people as well as goods and

services (MDOT Goal of *Safety and Security*). These improvements will also greatly improve congestion issues due to roadway design. For example, the addition of auxiliary and bypass lanes will enable the heavy peak-hour traffic to continue moving with competing turn movements.

7. *Bryans Road Town Common Enhancement Project* - 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 from the State with planning and implementation for this project, both in terms of technical design assistance and project funding.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Bryans Road Town Common is an Enhancement Project listed in the 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 5-4, as project “F-C-19.” Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include: Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan; and, Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The Bryans Road Town Common project is consistent with the MDOT Transportation Plan goals to enhance *Connectivity to Daily Life* by supporting the planned redevelopment and economic growth of the Bryans Road Town Center. The state investment in this crossroads will help continue the momentum needed to invigorate the jobs-housing balance in this planned mixed-use area. These roadway improvements will also provide safety enhancements for pedestrians seeking to access both shopping and local transit stops.

SHA District 5 Priorities

8. *MD 5 Business Improvements (Waldorf)* - 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 and weekends in this area. We are currently working with Mr. Dennis German and Mr. Pranoy Choudry of the SHA project team for a Community Enhancement project along MD 5 Business between US 301 and the CSX railroad right-of-way. This project includes the addition of a turn lane from west-bound MD 5 Business onto northbound Old Washington Road. We understand that SHA is pursuing land acquisition to provide a much needed right turn lane and further alleviate the traffic congestion at this intersection. We appreciate SHA's assistance as we revitalize and improve this corridor of Waldorf. 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 as outlined in the Waldorf Urban Design Guidelines. These improvements will help create the urban landscape for the Waldorf Town Center, while improving safety, mobility, and access management within the corridor.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The MD 5 Business Improvements Project is an Enhancement Project which is described in the 2004 Waldorf Sub Area Plan as well as the Waldorf Urban Design Study. Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include: Goal 5.3 Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development to continue in the County; Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic; Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation

network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan; and, Goal 5.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The MD 5 Business Improvements are consistent with MDOT's goals to promote *Safety and Security* through extending the right turn lane as a refuge for turning vehicles and allowing through traffic the necessary mobility in this major thoroughfare. The improvements also play a key role in Maryland's goal to promote *System Preservation and Performance* of the local and regional highway network, by both improving the flow of traffic as well as upgrading the existing roadway to modern design standards. The State goal of greater *Environmental Stewardship* is also achieved by retrofitting new stormwater management facilities within an area that currently has no stormwater treatment, further improving regional water quality. The additional request to reconstruct this section of MD 5 Business to the Waldorf Urban Design Standards will further enhance these goals, as well as provide the desired goal to provide *Connectivity to Daily Life*. This project is one of the top three roadway projects envisioned to initiate the redevelopment of the Waldorf Town Center. We look forward to working with SHA to provide the framework of government investment in infrastructure to be the catalyst for redefining Waldorf as a multi-modal Urban Town Center.

9. *US 301/White Plains Corridor Improvements* - An additional travel lane is needed, in each direction of US 301, to relieve increasing congestion from south of Smallwood Drive to south of MD 227. The taper of the 6-lane section of U.S. 301 to 4 lanes south of Smallwood Drive creates increasing back-ups during peak and certain off-peak hours. A continued effort to monitor and evaluate the synchronization of the four U.S. 301 traffic signals in White Plains may also reduce congestion and keep traffic flowing. These intersections are Billingsley Road, DeMarr Road, Theodore Green Boulevard, and MD 227.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The US 301/White Plains Corridor Improvement Project is a capacity improvement project that was originally envisioned to be part of the US 301 Southern Corridor Study. This break-out project request is consistent with the following specific 'Comp Plan' goals: Goal 5.1 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service. Goal 5.2 Direct the highway program toward the preservation of peak period capacities at acceptable levels along arterials such as US 301, MD 210, MD 228, and MD 5 through the careful application of access management and the development of a supporting network to separate local traffic; and, Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This project is consistent with the MDOT Transportation Plan goals to maximize the efficient use of resources and infrastructure through *System Preservation and Performance* projects. By improving and enhancing existing US 301 in the White Plains area, it will reduce the need for new alternative roadways and minimize any impacts to the environment. This minimally invasive project promotes the State's goal of achieving greater *Environmental Stewardship* by enhancing this long-standing transportation infrastructure.

10. *Hughesville Improvement Project* - 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 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 the 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. The Gallant Green Road traffic will 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.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Hughesville Improvement Project is an Enhancement Project listed in the 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 5-4, as project “F-S-1.” Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include: Goal 5.3 Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development to continue in the County; Goal 5.4 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic; Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan; and, Goal 5.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: The Hughesville Improvement Project is comprised of two components: the streetscape of MD 625 (formerly known as MD 5 Business) through the village of Hughesville and the intersection improvements at MD 5 (Leonardtown Road) at MD 625 (northern terminus). The streetscape project is consistent with MDOT’s goal of providing Connectivity to Daily Life, by creating the catalyst to revitalize the village of Hughesville. As the through traffic have been diverted outside of the village by the construction of the Hughesville Bypass, MD 625, Hughesville’s Main Street is now able to better serve the community. This project will help bring a rejuvenation of economic growth to a once thriving commerce center. In addition to the streetscape, 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 goals of providing increased *Safety and Security* for travelers in this high collision activity area and provides the desired System Preservation and Performance of the Maryland Highway System. Finally, this project also provides the *Connectivity to Daily Life* by promoting the state investment in economic growth that will spur investment by the private business community that is greatly needed in the village of Hughesville.

MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MdTA)

11. Gov. Harry Nice Bridge Replacement - 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 reduce traffic congestion. This bridge is also a major limiting factor in the path of evacuation from Washington D.C. to points south. Should a natural disaster or an issue of Homeland Security arise, this bridge would create a major bottleneck, with the current two-lane capacity limitation. The County’s 2006 Comprehensive Plan recommends increasing the capacity of the bridge to address this issue. Increased traffic capacity of the bridge would improve traffic flow, alleviate congestion, and provide an evacuation route of greater capacity.

We genuinely appreciate all of the coordination efforts by the Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA) staff through the Project Planning Phase and the NEPA process for the bridge improvements. While we understand that the project is not funded beyond Project Planning at this time, we believe the MdTA should continue to resolve right-of-way issues in cooperation with the State of Virginia, King George County, and the United States Navy, and accelerate the design and construction of the new bridge

structure. We strongly encourage MdTA to complete the process with the Federal Highway Administration to officially select the currently preferred alternative and receive a “Record of Decision” so that the project may be eligible for final design and construction funds.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Governor Harry Nice Bridge Replacement project is listed in the 2006 Charles County Comprehensive Plan in Table 5-4 as Project “L-S-18.” Specific ‘Comp Plan’ goals showing the project’s consistency include: Goal 5.1 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service; and, Goal 5.16 Foster close coordination between the County, Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland on matters related to planning and programming improvements transportation systems management, and whenever necessary, pursue legislative incentives on a coordinated basis.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This project is consistent with MDOT’s *Safety and Security Goals*: “To reduce the number and rate of transportation related fatalities and injuries” by replacing this bridge facility that frequent closures due to vehicle accidents due to antiquated and substandard design; and, to “Secure transportation assets for the movement of people and goods” by replacing this bridge that currently serves as the most limiting factor for safe and efficient travel within Charles County. This project is also consistent with MDOT’s *System Preservation and Performance Goals*: “To preserve and maintain the existing transportation network” and “Maximize operational performance and efficiency of existing systems” through replacement of this aging infrastructure to not only maintain, but improve performance of the facility.

MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

12. *Brandywine Transit Service Connector* - We request funding to expand VanGO operations to allow establishment of a new route linking Charles County to Brandywine Crossing just into Prince Georges County then linking to the Branch Avenue Metrorail Station. This is a much needed service to provide jobs access to the rapidly developing Brandywine Crossing and reverse commutes into Charles County. Charles County Staff *is currently engaged in initial planning discussions with Prince George’s County Transit Planning to initiate this connection.*

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Brandywine Transit Service Connector request is consistent with the Charles County Comprehensive Plan goals. Specific goals include: Goal 5.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County; Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers; Goal 5.12 Reduce the number of single occupant vehicles through Transportation Demand Management programs, expanded commuter bus systems, ridershare programs, carpool and vanpool programs, and additional park-and-ride lots.; and, Goal 5.13 Provide incentives that encourage commuters to switch to higher occupancy alternatives.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This request is consistent with the 2009 Maryland Transportation Plan regarding development of public transportation alternatives, integration of transportation programs and increasing the capacity of public transportation. Further this project is consistent with MDOT’s Quality of Service Goals: To enhance customer service experience; Provide reliable and predictable travel time across modal options for people and goods; and, Facilitate coordination and collaboration with agency partners and stakeholders.

13. Indian Head/Bryans Road Connector – This transit service request is to provide funding for new local bus 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 trying to obtain and maintain employment. Additionally, transit service development in this area can foster connections to Prince George’s County south county transit development creating routes to Fort Washington. This service is highly requested by local citizens trying to access additional job opportunities or have greater access to their existing employment.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Indian Head/Bryans Road Connector Transit Service Connector request is consistent with the Charles County Comprehensive Plan goals. Specific goals include: Goal 5.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County; Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers; Goal 5.12 Reduce the number of single occupant vehicles through Transportation Demand Management programs, expanded commuter bus systems, ridershare programs, carpool and vanpool programs, and additional park-and-ride lots.; and, Goal 5.13 Provide incentives that encourage commuters to switch to higher occupancy alternatives.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This request is consistent with the 2009 Maryland Transportation Plan regarding development of public transportation alternatives, integration of transportation programs and increasing the capacity of public transportation. Specifically, this funding request seeks to support MDOT’s goals to improve the *Quality of Service* as well as “facilitate coordination and collaboration with agency partners and stakeholders.”

14. Park & Ride Implementation - 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 is working with developers to secure additional Park and Ride lots through the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zone in the northern portion of Waldorf. A portion of this site may also serve as a future light rail station.

Charles County eagerly anticipates the construction of the MD 925 (Old Washington Road)/Smallwood Drive Park and Ride facility to alleviate overcrowded conditions at the US 301/Smallwood Drive Park and Ride lot. In addition to this planned new facility, the County continues to seek additional Park and Ride facilities to accommodate our growing number of commuter bus riders, as well as potential future rail station locations. As the fastest growing commuter bus system in the State, and realizing the escalating price of fuel, we continue to seek additional Park and Ride lots to facilitate the growth of this vital transit service.

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 show this projects consistency: Goal 5.6 Concentrate development density and intensity in mixed use districts and in the Urban Core to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation; Goal 5.7 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan; and Goal 5.9 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the Development District and in Town Centers.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This request is consistent with the 2009 Maryland Transportation Plan regarding enhancements to *Quality of Service* as it has facilitated “coordination and collaboration with agency partners and stakeholders.” The project also seeks to promote *System Preservation and Performance* through maximizing the operational performance and efficiency of the existing highway system through reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicles on the highway network and improving congestion levels.

15. *Commuter Bus Enhancements* - As a result of the growth of the MTA Commuter Bus System and the associated issues raised by the riders, the Charles County Commissioners formed a Commuter Bus Advisory Group in early 2007. The Advisory Group conducted a bus rider survey of all bus routes in Southern Maryland to identify and evaluate the needs and concerns of passengers utilizing the service. Based on the overwhelming response to the survey, the predominant concern was the need for more commuter bus services, including more buses, more trips per day, and an expansion of the routes. On October 2nd 2008, the Advisory Group presented the final report to the Charles County Commissioners, including a series of recommended improvements and expansions. The Commissioners forwarded the report to MTA in October 2008, in an effort to work cooperatively with MTA to enhance this rapidly growing service, and promote transit services through our forthcoming land use policies that seek to increase density in the urban core of Waldorf.

Consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan: The Commuter Bus Enhancements 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 5.12 Reduce the number of single occupant vehicles through Transportation Demand Management programs, expanded commuter bus systems, ridershare programs, carpool and vanpool programs, and additional park-and-ride lots; and, Goal 5.13 Provide incentives that encourage commuters to switch to higher occupancy alternatives.

Consistency with the 2009 MDOT Transportation Plan: This project is consistent with the Maryland Transportation Plan as it is a primary project to promote *Connectivity for Daily Life, System Preservation and Performance*, and *Environmental Stewardship*. This accomplished by providing multi-modal transportation options, preserving existing roadway capacity and improving air quality by reducing the number of single-occupancy vehicles.