



TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR SOUTHERN MARYLAND

P.O. BOX 745 HUGHESVILLE, MARYLAND 20637

(301) 274-1922
(301) 870-2520
FAX (301) 274-1924

June 10, 2014

The Honorable James T. Smith
Secretary Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Drive
P.O. Box 548, Mail Stop 200
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Re: Southern Maryland Regional Transportation Priorities

Dear Secretary Smith:

The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland is pleased to submit the attached list of Regional Transportation Priorities for you to include in the FY 2015-2020 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Once again, our regional transportation priorities have the endorsement of the Boards of County Commissioners of Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties, and were unanimously endorsed by the Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee (RIAC) for Southern Maryland and adopted by the Executive Board of the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland.

The top regional priorities and regionally significant projects were all recommended in the 2008 final report of the Commission to Study Southern Maryland Transportation Needs Assessment in partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Southern Maryland Corridor Preservation Study of 2010. The 2008 Transportation Needs Assessment is a long-term strategic guide to implementation of transportation system projects to serve our citizens, federal work force, regional travelers, military bases, evacuation plans and to maintain the competitive posture of our regional economy. We are pleased that the goals and analysis in the regional report reflect the needs of each of the counties and the region as a whole. This regional analysis provides a foundation for State transportation policy and infrastructure investment in the Southern Maryland Region.

Our Top Regional Priority Highway Project continues to be the Thomas Johnson Bridge replacement with accompanying improvements of the Route 2/4 corridor and the MD 235 interchange. This project will relieve commuter congestion, improve safety, properly position the Patuxent River Naval Air Station for future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), improve emergency evacuation plans and provide bicycle tourism opportunities between the Three Notch Trail and Solomon's Island.

The Top Highway Project has been included in the CTP since FY 2007-2013. With the new funds allocated in FY 2014, engineering and construction of the replacement bridge and the interchange at MD 4 and MD 235 will continue to be a multi-million dollar capital investment, for which the funding will be appropriated over many more years. We at the Tri-County Council urge the continued recognition of this vital project to the Southern Maryland Region, through programming incremental funding for engineering and/or right-of-way acquisition continuing in the FY 2015 budget year and beyond.

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Our number one Regional Transit Priority is the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project to provide fixed-route, high-capacity transit service in the MD 5/US 301 corridor from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains in Charles County. Maryland Transit Administration's continued efforts to work with Charles County to advance the planning and development of the Rapid Transit service in conjunction with Prince George's County are appreciated.

With Charles County, in conjunction with the preferred alignment, and redevelopment of downtown Waldorf, we look forward to the inclusion of the project planning funding and right-of-way preservation funding. Charles County, the State's second fastest growing population, has the fastest growing regional commuter bus ridership in the State. This Rapid Transit Investment will have a significant impact in the improvement of air quality and carbon footprint of the Region, as well as significantly reducing the congestion to the Washington D.C. metropolitan area.

Southern Maryland's Regionally Significant Projects include:

- Construction of a controlled access highway option for US 301 in Waldorf that will balance the needs of residential and business communities while minimizing the impacts to cultural, social and natural resources.
- Enhancement of Commuter Bus Services along with development of additional Park & Ride Lots in Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties.
- The Upgrade of MD Route 2/4 from the southern intersection of MD 745 (Main Street) at Industry Lane to north Auto Drive that provides widening to six lanes with access controls and turning restrictions.

It is vitally important that we build on the current progress with funding of the planning, engineering and right-of-way acquisition for these urgently needed and long-standing regional priorities in the coming fiscal year. We continue to be confident that the Maryland Department of Transportation, working with the Tri-County Council, and our local government partners, will do everything possible to make sure that essential steps are included in the FY 2015-2020 CTP to continue making progress of these priorities toward future implementation. We thank you for your support, consideration, and affirmative action with respect to these important Southern Maryland Regional Projects.

Respectfully submitted,



Steve Weems
Chair

Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

Cc: The Honorable Sally Y. Jameson, Maryland House of Delegates, Chair – Southern Maryland Delegation
The Honorable Pat Nutter, President, Calvert County Commissioners
The Honorable Candice Quinn Kelly, President, Charles County Commissioners
The Honorable Jack Russell, President, St. Mary's County Commissioners
John Hartline, Executive Director, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland