

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS *of* CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND

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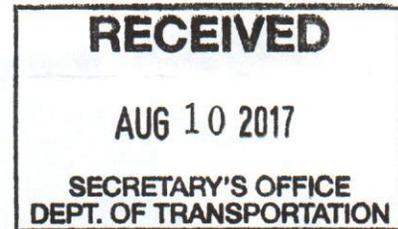
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COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

HEATHER PRICE
COUNTY ATTORNEY

August 1, 2017

The Honorable Pete Rahn
Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076



RE: Caroline County CTP Priority

Dear Secretary Rahn,

The County Commissioners of Caroline County wish to start this letter by thanking you, the Department, and Governor Hogan for the significant investments you are making in improving infrastructure in Caroline County. With the County's two major and longtime priorities of the Dover Bridge replacement and Route 404 dualization well underway, we recognize that MDOT is spending a great deal of resources in our county. Therefore, we felt it was appropriate to limit our priorities to a single, straightforward item: a traffic light at Route 480 and Central Avenue in Ridgely. While there are several other small projects on State roads within the County that are important to our municipal governments, this project is the Commissioners' sole priority.

While the traffic volume during previous SHA counts did not meet warrants for a traffic light in this location, the reality of the traffic patterns and local use clearly demonstrate the need for a signalized intersection to preserve public safety. The intersection is susceptible to frequent near-misses or conflicts and resulting collisions between vehicles due to a combination of traffic volumes, operating speeds, and turning movements at or near the intersection. Additionally, users on the minor street frequently experience long delays in making crossing or turning maneuvers because of the lack of safe gaps in the major road traffic flow.

The Commissioners are particularly concerned about the potential safety risks to children posed by this intersection. The intersection is a school bus crossing hazard due to the lack of safe gaps in traffic previously mentioned, and the slow acceleration of school busses. The intersection is also on the travel route to Ridgely Elementary School, North Caroline High School, and the Benedictine School, making this safety hazard especially worrisome. Furthermore, proximity of the intersection to youth sporting fields increases traffic – traffic which includes children being transported to games and practices.

In addition to the longstanding concerns outlined above, we expect the improvements to MD 404 to increase traffic volumes in the area, including to Ridgely, which is a proximate stop for shopping and dining. The intersection of MD 480 and Central Avenue is the Town's primary intersection,

and this increase in traffic volume, while a welcome boon to downtown businesses, will create additional safety concerns at the intersection.

The Commissioners sincerely appreciate the investment Governor Hogan has made in the County's priority transportation projects, as well as our excellent working relationship with our SHA District Office. However, last year marked the 60th anniversary of the Town's request, and we firmly believe the need for this safety measure is more urgent than ever. We thank you for your consideration of this project.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. Franklin, President
County Commissioners of Caroline County