

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS of CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND

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HEATHER PRICE
COUNTY ATTORNEY

April 19, 2018

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



RE: Revised Caroline County CTP Priorities

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 have made in improving infrastructure in Caroline County. We truly appreciate the work that has been done to address our two largest and most longstanding projects – dualization of Route 404 and the replacement of Dover Bridge. We look forward to our continued partnership to make progress on our current priority projects.

Priority A: Traffic Signal at Route 480 and Central Avenue, Ridgely

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.

Priority B: Widen Route 404 to Four Lanes from Route 16/Harmony Road to the Delaware Line

The progress made on Route 404 has been wonderful. We are certain that it will help reduce accidents and congestion, and increase user satisfaction. While we know it is a significant undertaking, the Commissioners request that the State begin the work on the final phase of the project. Specifically, the County requests that SHA start preliminary planning and fund design and engineering, as well as any necessary property or right-of-way acquisition, to dualize Route 404 to the Delaware state line.

Priority C: Expansion of Gay Street, Denton

The Commissioners support the request of the Town of Denton to extend Gay Street from Legion Road to Route 404. This expansion would reduce congestion, as well as better facilitate highway access by emergency vehicles leaving the urgent care center in Denton Plaza. Denton has provided detailed design drawings and cost estimates for this project.

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. We thank you for your consideration of these priority projects.

Sincerely,



Larry C. Porter, President
County Commissioners of Caroline County