



April 16, 2020

The Honorable Secretary Gregory Slater  
Secretary of Transportation  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, Maryland 21076



RE: 2020 MDOT Tour Meeting  
Board of County Commissioners Transportation Priorities

Dear Secretary Slater:

The Washington County Board of County Commissioners, Interim County Administrator, and staff look forward to your 2020 visit. Please consider these priorities in the upcoming six-year Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) budget for transportation projects.

**Interstate 81 Widening:** The Interstate 81 widening project remains a top priority as evidenced by the overwhelming support for this year's INFRA Grant application for Phase 2 Construction. As you are aware, the County collaborated with MDOT on this application and offered a local contribution of \$1 million towards the project if the grant is secured. We appreciate MDOT's commitment to the construction of the Potomac River Bridge and interstate improvements to Williamsport. Similarly, please commit construction funding for widening the entire 12 miles to the Pennsylvania state line even if the INFRA grant is not secured, as this project is vital to the County in that it will expand highway capacity to meet freight demand and improve safety, economic development, and mobility. Over 60,000 vehicles, including over 30 percent truck traffic, travel daily on Interstate 81, including 12 percent of the nation's commerce amounting to approximately \$177 billion in goods each year. The County submitted the project as part of the Chapter 30 Major Transportation Project Scoring System and assigned all the points to this project. In the FY 20-25 CTP, this project was ranked 16 of 38, with Howard County, Montgomery County, Frederick County, and Anne Arundel County all having multiple projects ranked ahead of Washington County.

**Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO):** Washington County appreciates the advancements provided with the implementation of TSMO to optimize the performance of existing and programmed infrastructure and looks forward to additional enhancements as the program matures.

**MDOT Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART):** The CHART program has improved coordination of response to traffic incidents in the County. Washington County requests that MDOT consider expansion of the program, including collaboration to coordinate resources in the future public safety training facility and additional CHART signs/cameras for more extensive monitoring.

80 West Baltimore Street | Hagerstown, MD 21740-6003 | P: 240.313.2460 | TDD: 711

**Interstate 70 and Maryland 65 Interchange Improvements:** MDOT is in the planning phase for the interchange improvements that include the proposed construction of a partial cloverleaf. Construction is scheduled to move forward on the replacement of the Interstate 70 bridges as planned in the CTP. The interchange improvements, not including the bridge replacement project, were identified for planning funding; however, no design/engineering or construction funding was included in the FY 20-25 CTP. This project is not part of the Chapter 30 Major Transportation Project Scoring System as it is the reconstruction of an existing interchange. The interchange currently serves the Premium Outlets to the north and several other new and growing developments to the south. Over 80,000 vehicles cross this interchange daily, and traffic is growing substantially as the new developments progress. These interchange improvements, as well as coordination by MDOT for much needed traffic signal synchronization along Maryland 65 in this area, are important to local businesses, citizens, and commuters.

**Highway User Revenue (HUR):** The amount received in Fiscal Year 2020 was larger than last year but is still drastically lower than funding prior to Fiscal Year 2010. The County is in desperate need of this additional funding to support the operations associated with maintaining approximately 900 miles of road in Washington County. The County is down over \$70 million in HUR funding over the last 10 years. The County appreciates your ongoing efforts, and please continue to provide your support in attempting to reestablish these funding levels.

**Aviation Program:** Construction is underway for the terminal facility at the Hagerstown Regional Airport. These improvements will allow greater passenger capacity in our secure area, update many of our aged aesthetics, and improve passenger flow through the terminal. Hagerstown Regional Airport had approximately 50,000 aircraft operations and over 27,000 passengers last year on flights to Myrtle Beach, St. Petersburg, Orlando, Pittsburgh, and Baltimore. We also appreciate support of the design and rehabilitation of our primary runway 9/27 that is over 10 years old. The County is also looking to upgrade to new LED lighting fixtures in the future. The County seeks continued funding assistance for the airport marketing plan and Virtual Perimeter Monitoring Security system (VPMS). The VPMS has been a phased project for multiple previous years, this year will be the final phase.

**Transit Program:** Public demand for transit service and route expansion continues. While this past year has been a struggle for many, transit vehicles continue to travel 500,000 miles annually and log ridership exceeding expectations. Additional operational funds would serve to expand transit in accordance with the Transportation Development Plan. In recent years, Federal and State operating funds have remained consistently flat, placing the financial deficit burden on local sources of matching requirements. The County provides local match to support the Federal allotment. In Fiscal Year 2020, local County match/over-match dollars fund the subsidy by approximately 38 percent. In Fiscal Year 2021, local County match/over-match will swell by approximately \$114,000, a local match well out of percentage proportion of the projected net project cost. Transit is requesting consideration for financial relief via an increase in Federal and State funds. These increases are needed to bridge the gap between revenues and expenses associated with expansion of transit related services to rural areas of the County, along with expansion of demand response paratransit service for individuals with disabilities. Additional Federal and State funds would also support staffing at the Transit Transfer Center in downtown Hagerstown.

**Sidewalks:** Please continue to fund Transportation Alternatives Programs (TAP), which includes the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program. The County has most recently utilized SRTS funding on the Marsh Pike project, improving safety for school children and other pedestrians. Pedestrian safety improvements on Dual Highway (US40) are nearing completion, and the County appreciates your continued support of pedestrian safety-related projects that enhance infrastructure in the County as well as the City of Hagerstown.

**Railroad Crossings/Study:** The County maintains the road adjacent to 37 rail crossings and looks forward to working again with the MDOT/SHA Railroad Crossing Manager on safety improvements at highway-railroad grade crossings. Together we have completed multiple upgrades to date with anticipation of more to follow. Additionally, House Bill 1367, Transportation – Western Maryland, MARC Rail Extension – Study, is pending for which the County will be consulted as a stakeholder and provided any recommendations regarding the feasibility and cost associated with extending the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) train rail service to western Maryland.

**Appalachian Regional Commission and County-State Coordinated Projects:** Crayton Boulevard Extended and Colonel Henry K. Douglas Drive Extended are federal aid Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) projects and were successfully completed this year by the efforts of the County and MDOT staff working together with Tri-County Council of Western Maryland and ARC Local Access Road program staff. We appreciated your support on these projects and look forward to collaboration with your staff on several other local projects that involve state/federal funding, including Eastern Boulevard at MD64 intersection improvements, Professional Boulevard Bridge, Halfway Boulevard Extended, and Wright Road.

Thank you for your continued efforts to improve transportation in Washington County. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (240) 313-2407 or [shobbs@washco-md.net](mailto:shobbs@washco-md.net).

Sincerely,



Scott Hobbs  
Director of Engineering

Enclosures

cc: Board of County Commissioners  
Kirk Downey, Interim County Administrator  
Washington County Delegation Members  
Senator Benjamin Cardin  
Senator Christopher Van Hollen  
Congressman David Trone  
Anthony Crawford, SHA District Engineer  
Rodney Tissue, City Engineer  
Matthew Mullenax, HEPMPO Executive Director  
Garrison Plessinger, Airport Director  
Kevin Cerrone, Transit Director

# Priority Interstate 81 Widening

Pennsylvania State Line

## LEGEND

- - Current State Project
  - - Proposed Phase II
  - - Proposed Phase III
  - - Proposed Phase IV
  - Interstate 70
  - Municipal Boundaries
  - Washington County Boundary
  - Economic Development Parks (Industrial Parks)
- 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



Hagerstown Regional Airport  
(Towered Airport featuring  
a 7000' Runway)

Desired Expansion from US 40 to PA State Line  
Approximately 27,500 Linear Feet  
Unfunded Preliminary Estimate \$127.2 Million

Desired Expansion from Halfway Boulevard to US 40  
Approximately 12,000 Linear Feet  
Unfunded Preliminary Estimate \$65.2 Million

HAGERSTOWN

FUNKSTOWN

WV  
State  
Line

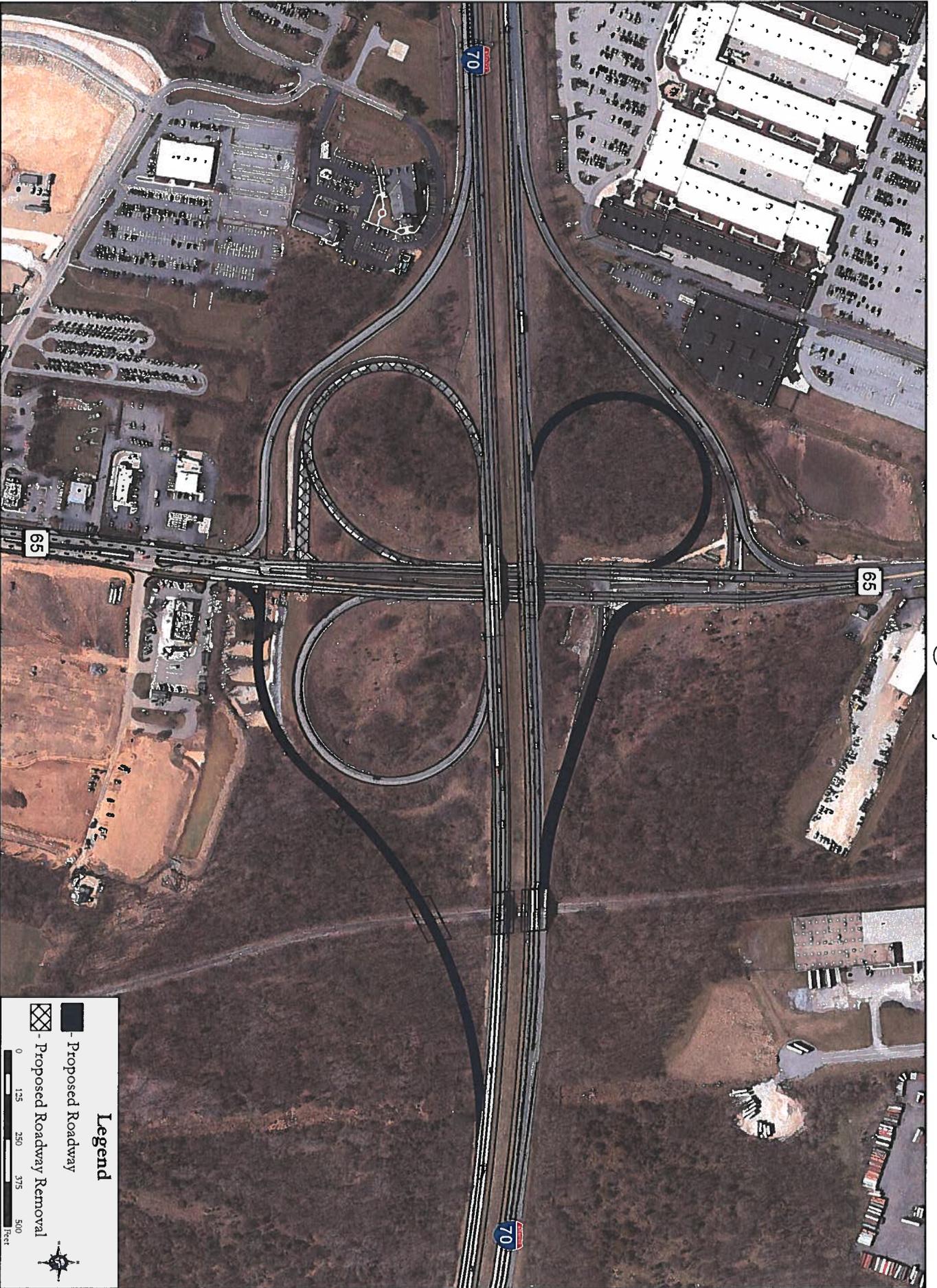
WILLIAMSPORT

Desired Area for Expansion from MD 63/MD 68 to Halfway Boulevard  
Approximately 20,000 Linear Feet  
Unfunded Preliminary Estimate \$98.6 Million

Current State Project Area  
Approximately 4,500 Linear Feet  
\*Includes Six Lane Bridge  
Over Potomac River\*  
Maryland Share \$46.8 Million  
Total Cost \$87,137,000  
Fall 2016- Summer 2020



Interstate 70 @ Maryland 65



**Legend**

- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Roadway Removal

0 125 250 375 500 Feet