

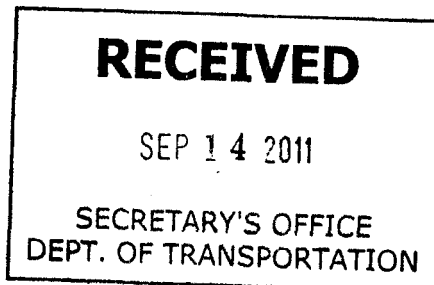
ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT
**BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS**



Francis Jack Russell, President
Lawrence D. Jarboe, Commissioner
Cynthia L. Jones, Commissioner
Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner
Daniel L. Morris, Commissioner

September 13, 2011

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



RE: Transportation Program Priorities

Dear Secretary Swaim-Staley:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit St. Mary's County's priorities for your use in preparing the FY 2012 Consolidated Transportation Program. We appreciate efforts in finding an equitable alternative in generating revenue enhancements in lieu of raising the gas tax during this time of decreased revenues to fund transportation costs. We continue to be concerned with the decrease in motor vehicle fuel tax receipts and the impact of the diversion of the funding away from Maryland counties. This may cause the need for another round of revenue enhancements, which we will be sure to follow.

We appreciate the construction funding for the MD Route 246 Streetscape Project and the partial planning funding for the MD Route 4 Corridor/Thomas Johnson Bridge and the MD Route 5 from MD Route 245 to MD Route 243 expansion projects. We trust that the balance of the planning funding can be allocated through 2012 as shown in the adopted Consolidated Transportation Plan (CTP). As we have discussed, multi-modal transportation will remain a regional high priority for Southern Maryland. Priority local projects that we would like to discuss with you at our annual tour meeting include the following:

Highway Projects

MD Route 237 - Chancellors Run Road: Thank you for pursuing this project to completion this calendar year. Our residents are benefiting from the improved traffic safety and capacity, and the landscaped median is an added aesthetic benefit.

MD Route 5 - Point Lookout Road: The upgrade of the Point Lookout portion of this roadway to include shoulders and bicycle accommodations will greatly improve safety, accommodate visitors to the County's most prominent park, and provide roadside enhancements along this primary evacuation route for the southernmost portion of the County. With this project currently in the Secondary Development and Evaluation Program, the Board previously selected the \$3.8M breakout project (south of



Camp Brown Road to Ranger Station) described by Mr. Pedersen, former Highway Administrator, as our priority interim improvement for this corridor, which includes the necessary widening for the Scotland Beach intersection. We request the remainder of engineering, removed in last year's program, be re-established in the 2012 program, with right-of-way and construction following in the near term.

Point Lookout Road, from MD Route 243 to MD Route 245: Thank you for placing this project within the Secondary Development Program for widening and multi-lane reconstruction. The planning study should continue to be fully funded for completion in FY 2012, with engineering beginning upon completion of planning. As requested, short-term measures should be considered to eliminate safety issues along the MD Route 5 corridor, particularly at the Moakley Street intersection which is adjacent to the entrance to St. Mary's Hospital and experiences continuous emergency and public vehicular activity.

MD Route 5, from MD Route 246 to MD Route 249: We would like to refine our request on this project to assist traffic in the Great Mills area in the near term. Our constituents are concerned with continued congestion at the MD Route 5-MD Route 246 intersection. We understand from the 2006 Feasibility Report that improvements between MD Route 246 and MD Route 249 are estimated to cost over \$20M.

We are requesting that MDOT consider a less costly interim project to improve traffic operations at the MD Route 246 intersection. Consideration should be given to options such as providing two northbound through lanes on MD Route 5 (with a lane reduction prior to the bridge), and/or a triple left turn lane from southbound MD Route 5 onto MD Route 246.

Traffic congestion on MD Route 5 between Flat Iron Road/Indian Bridge Road and MD Route 249 creates safety concerns for those entering and exiting Holy Face Church, Holy Face Rectory and Little Flower School. Could these three entrances be much improved by adding a left turn lane and extending the additional right lanes that are already in place? By considering less costly near term improvements, the more costly improvements may be deferred for many years

We are also concerned about the effectiveness of an additional traffic signal in the works near the MD 5/246 intersection at the Shetz store and whether those funds might be better utilized elsewhere. As we write this letter, our staff is in communication with State Highway to determine the purpose for the new signal. If the additional signal must go forward, we trust that it will be re-evaluated to ensure the timing and traffic flow is properly synched.

Thomas Johnson Bridge/ MD Route 4: Thank you for your staff's presentation on June 28, 2011. We trust that our August 2, 2011 letter transmitting design preferences will assist in your obtaining a design and location approval. Since our County-wide Transportation Plan predicts severe congestion in this vital County gateway by that time, it is imperative that the remainder of planning funding remain in the 2012 program. We

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also recommend that alternates such as ferry service be explored as part of the planning process. The MD Route 4-MD Route 235 corridor remains one of the high profile and primary entryways to the Naval Air Station and visitor gate.

MD Route 234 - MD Route 242: On June 23, 2005, our staff met with the SHA's representatives and discussed the failing level of service at this intersection and the evening delays. Initially, additional approach lanes were recommended, but more recently SHA staff has recommended a roundabout project. Since the Chaptico roundabout operates well and has reduced accidents, we agree that this option should be pursued and request this project to be added as a safety/spot project to the minor project list.

Trails and Bikeways: As the bicycling community continues to grow within St. Mary's County, we have received an increasing number of requests for bicycle accommodations along our roadways. Our adopted County-wide Transportation Plan analyzed all available bicycle plans to arrive at a County-wide plan. We are including paved shoulders in our overlay program, and are requiring developers to provide facilities along their frontage. We are requesting that MDOT participate in this effort through their development review process as well as the CTP. Improved shoulders should be included in the System Preservation program and special projects. Some of the higher priority State roadways with shoulders in need of improvement include MD Route 6 from MD Route 5 to All Faith Church Road, MD Route 245 from MD Route 5 to Baldrige Street and east of MD Route 245, MD Route 5 from MD Route 243 to MD Route 245, MD Routes 236, 243, 272, and 244. We are requesting that staff discuss priorities with SHA staff during their quarterly meetings. Your continued support of the Three Notch Trail within the Transportation Enhancement Program is also appreciated. Phase V has recently been completed and the next phase is anticipated to be constructed in FY 2014.

MD Route 712: Although traffic volumes have not reached the point of moving the project from the Needs Inventory into Preliminary Planning, we have received preliminary agreement with the Patuxent River Naval Air Station in identifying a future 120-foot right-of-way corridor, which will minimize the impact to the residential properties to the south of existing MD Route 712. We appreciate your staff's efforts in preparation of a right-of-way plat that will affect the needed property transfer(s) in the near future and request that this effort be pursued at this time.

Pegg Road Extended: Thank you for your Department's willingness to assist in improving the SHA approaches to Pegg Road. We anticipate completion of the Preliminary Engineering this year, but the formal design and construction of the project is currently not in our 6-year capital program due to funding constraints and other factors.

Resurfacing and Rehabilitation

MD Route 4 and MD Route 234: Although we are encouraged by the recent ARRA funding for overlay projects in St. Mary's County, MD Route 234 appears to be in dire need of an overlay, and we hope this project can be completed during FY 2012. We are also pleased that a portion of MD Route 4 south of MD Route 235 is programmed for an overlay. Please investigate the need to overlay MD Route 243 as well, which has extensive alligator cracking.

Community Safety and Enhancements

MD Route 5 in Leonardtown: We are pleased to see that this streetscape project has now been completed.

MD Route 246 in Lexington Park: We are also pleased to see this project nearing completion, and we appreciate your staff's assistance in modifying the project to accommodate fire truck turning movements.

Transit Projects

Bus Service: We are again requesting reconsideration of funding for the long-awaited Western Route to serve our growing rural population. We are also supportive of additional commuter bus service as needed.

Charlotte Hall Park and Ride Lot: We were pleased to recently sign the Intergovernmental Agreement for a 500-space parking lot and look forward to construction in spring 2012.

New Market Park and Ride Lot: We are pleased that this project is now being pursued as the second 500-space lot in the northern County. This lot will alleviate increased traffic in the Golden Beach Road area, which will be generated by the Charlotte Hall Park and Ride Lot.

Sidewalk Retrofit Program

MD Route 5 - Mohawk Drive: We are pleased that this project is being funded with ARRA funds. Since the Three Notch Trail has been open for use for over a year, we request a high priority in completing this project as it provides access from the community to the Trail.

MD Route 4, from MD Route 235 to Wildewood Parkway: We understand sidewalk retrofit funding is now available and have requested a retrofit project to assist Wildewood residents and residents of the Walden Sierra Facility in accessing shopping

areas along MD Route 235. Similarly, along with the Town of Leonardtown, we would request a sidewalk connection from the College of Southern Maryland to the Governmental Center on the south side of MD Route 245.

Other Projects

Patuxent River Naval Air Museum: We appreciate the State's patience throughout the redesign process, and we anticipate advertisement of this project for construction in the near future.

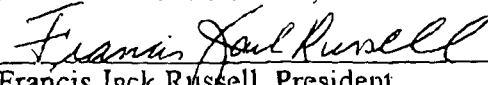
MD Route 5 at St. Mary's College: Please continue your efforts in the traffic calming and safety project, which is vital to maintaining this campus as one of the top public colleges in the nation.

General Aviation Grants

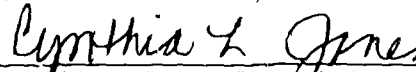
St. Mary's County Regional Airport: We thank you for the recent Grant Awards for the required Wetland Mitigation construction, property acquisition and obstruction removal projects, which are currently well underway. Future project funding at the current participation levels will enhance our ability to upgrade regional transportation infrastructure, which includes the business and corporate communities that will benefit from the runway extension project.


In light of the continuing funding issues facing the State, we look forward to receiving the CTP in the near future. We look forward to discussing the continued progression on these local and regional projects at both the September 6, 2011, pre-tour and our formal September 20, 2011, meetings. Please extend our gratitude to Governor O'Malley for all his support, especially on transportation issues and energy management and conservation initiatives.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND


Francis Jack Russell, President

Lawrence D. Jarboe, Commissioner


Cynthia L. Jones, Commissioner


Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner


Daniel L. Morris, Commissioner

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cc: Senator Roy P. Dyson
Delegate John F. Wood, Jr.
Delegate John L. Bohanan, Jr.
Delegate Anthony J. O'Donnell
J. Harry Norris, Leonardtown Mayor
Wayne E. Clark, Executive Director, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
John Savich, County Administrator
Robert B. Schaller, Director, Department of Economic and Community Development
George A. Erichsen, P.E., Director, Department of Public Works & Transportation
Phil Shire, Acting Director, Land Use & Growth Management
Jackie Fournier, Transportation Manager