



*Queen
Anne's
County*

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**THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY**

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May 13, 2025

Mr. Paul J. Wiedefeld, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 548
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076-0548

**Re: Queen Anne's County Transportation Priority Letter
FY 2026 – 2031 Consolidated Transportation Plan**

Dear Secretary Wiedefeld:

The “*safety and mobility for our citizens*” is the driving factor towards the establishment of our local transportation priorities. Below is a listing of the transportation priorities for Queen Anne's County for inclusion in the 2026-2031 Consolidated Transportation Plan.

Specifically, we wish to call your attention to our highest priorities, which include funding for additional capacity for the Bay Bridge, critical transportation improvements on Kent Island, engineering of the US Route 50 & 213 interchange, and continued support of local transit.

William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial Bay Bridge

As projected, traffic impacts and congestion within the Bay Bridge corridor will continue to deteriorate. The increase in traffic and limited capacity of the Bay Bridge as the single crossing of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland will result in continued and consistent delays. The delays on this primary transportation and freight corridor impact the daily operations of many Maryland residents and businesses but impacts a disproportionate number of Queen Anne's County residents making it a top priority. It is vital to the safety and mobility of Queen Anne's County Citizens that continued steps be taken to quickly complete the Bay Crossing Study Tier II NEPA process and move directly into design and engineering for the corridor improvements. It is essential to establish funding and a schedule for the design and engineering of the preferred alternative to begin immediately following the NEPA process.

As the Tier II NEPA study moves towards selecting a preferred alternative for corridor improvements, please continue to review and include transportation improvements identified in the locally adopted

public policy documents such as the Queen Anne's County Comprehensive Plan, Kent Island Transportation Plan and the Queen Anne's County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

Ramp Management Program on Kent Island

The NEPA process, design and construction of a future bay crossing will take years to complete, therefore, we must continue to evaluate and implement all possible options to actively manage congestion during peak travel times. We appreciate MDOT's support and resources committed to the US 50/301 Ramp Management Program on Kent Island during the summers of 2024 and 2025 as a new alternative congestion management strategy. We look forward to our continued partnership with MDOT to implement strategies to manage congestion in the corridor.

Maryland Route 18

Recognizing that the NEPA study, design, and funding improvements to add a new bay crossing will take time, Queen Anne's County has identified vital interim improvements in the Kent Island Transportation Plan to improve the movement of traffic on Kent Island. The Kent Island Transportation Plan is posted on our website at www.qac.org/DocumentCenter/View/4460.

The top priority of the many improvements identified in the Kent Island Transportation Plan is to enhance the safety and capacity of Maryland 18. The plan specifically identifies the need to initiate comprehensive roadway and pedestrian improvements from Castle Marina Road to the Kent Narrows. As the only alternative route to using Route 50/301 this project will serve to increase mobility and reduce routine congestion as well as seasonal traffic gridlock. The County recognizes and appreciates MDOT taking the first steps towards planning improvements by conducting the MD 18 Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) for MD 18. We are hopeful that the study recommendations will move quickly towards implementation resulting in construction of improvements. As a MDOT planning document, the Bay Crossing Study should also incorporate all of the recommendations and proposed improvements in the MD 18 PEL.

US 301 & MD 405 Intersection

Queen Anne's County has continued to raise safety concerns related to all at grade intersections along the US 301 corridor and specifically the US 301 and MD 405 intersection. Over the last year MDOT has made safety improvements to the intersection. Queen Anne's County appreciates the steps taken and the continued monitoring of the effects of these improvements. We will continue to work together to implement additional safety improvements as needed at this intersection.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements

The Kent Island Transportation Plan and Queen Anne's County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan identify a pedestrian overpass crossing US 50/301 on Kent Island near the US 50 and MD 8 interchange as an important transportation goal. This pedestrian overpass and approaches would be a key link in connecting the Cross Island Trail with the South Island Trail on MD 8. As the County conducts a feasibility study, we request MDOT's assistance to review and approve a crossing location for the pedestrian overpass. The County also request MDOT's assistance with the funding the design of a pedestrian overpass immediately upon the completion of the feasibility study.

The County is also requesting continued support of our efforts to expand the Queen Anne's County bicycle and pedestrian network. The top tier priorities identified in the Queen Anne's County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan include the extension of both the Cross Island Trail and the South Island Trail. The Queen Anne's County trail system provides for an environmentally friendly alternative mode of transportation to connect our citizens to jobs, commercial areas, schools, parks,

and other services. Making vital connections in our trail system promotes a healthy alternative to driving, creates recreational opportunities and promotes tourism opportunities for visitors as well as an everyday transportation alternative for our residents. The County will continue to provide local funds to leverage the support of State and Federal grants towards development of capital trail improvements.

US Route 50 & 213 Interchange

Construction of an interchange at US 50 & MD 213 is a long-standing priority for Queen Anne's County and has been listed in the CTP for over 25 years as part of the US 50 Ocean Gateway project to widen US 50 from Queenstown to Wye Mills. Having the corridor improvements on US 50 in place as outlined in previous CTP's is vital to prepare for the anticipated improvements associated with a new Bay Crossing. Land acquisition and design work has occurred in Wye Mills clearing the way for final engineering and construction of this interchange. As thru traffic on Route 50 continues to increase, this overpass becomes essential to safely move traffic between Route 50 & 213 as well as providing safe access to Chesapeake College, our regional Community College serving five counties.

Transit

The Transit division requests continued support of County Ride, our Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS). In January of 2023, we started a "Ride Free in '23" campaign to grow ridership and we continued this program through 2024 and 2025. We saw a significant increase in passengers in 2023 and even greater growth in the 2024. County Ride is projected to finish FY 2025 at 33,904 rides which would be a 7.6% increase over FY 2024.

In FY 2024, we had 38,466 driver hours worked and those drivers drove 422,000 miles. The Annual Transportation Plan for FY 2026 includes capital funding requests for Preventative Maintenance and two new buses. Additional funding is imperative to meet the public demand, and the demographic information that indicates services of older adults and individuals with disabilities will continue to increase. All funding provided through MTA is greatly appreciated as we continue to provide safe and reliable transportation to the citizens of Queen Anne's County.

Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry:

The proposed high-speed and long-range electric ferry aims to connect various ports along the Chesapeake Bay, fostering tourism, enhancing multi-modal connections, and showcasing the benefits of an electrified waterfront. A collaboration effort between multiple jurisdictions has occurred to prepare a feasibility study to evaluate the vessel parameters, terminal sites, operational and maintenance needs, tourism and economic strategies and system partnerships. This project aligns with the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goals, specifically promoting environmental stewardship, serving communities & supporting the economy, delivering system quality, and enhancing safety and security. Queen Anne's County supports the establishment of a Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry and are requesting MDOT endorse and support the regional effort that will benefit many jurisdictions in Maryland.

Regional Cooperation & Coordination

As a member of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, we are very invested in cost effective, systematic, and regionally integrated approaches to addressing multimodal congestion, mobility, and safety in the Baltimore region. This year, with even greater funding constraints statewide, this is even more important. Our regional priorities continue to support these principles, focusing on operational efficiency, multi-modal mobility, and cross-agency and cross-border coordination.

- To facilitate this interjurisdictional coordination, we would prioritize the Bay Bridge Corridor of US 50/30 from MD 404 in Queen Anne's County to I-97 in Anne Arundel County as a multi-jurisdiction corridor of State and Regional significance.
- We strongly support funding and implementing the regional transit corridors in the State's Regional Transit Plan and request MDOT advance planning, design, and operational funding in coordination with our local and regional transit systems to meet the goals and priorities in the Regional Transit Plan.
- Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategies offer cost effective approaches that leverage our investments in the existing transportation system. We strongly support funding and implementing TSMO strategies and are particularly interested in how these strategies can address the region's bottlenecks.
- We strongly support funding and implementing bike and pedestrian projects in the region.
- We strongly support the Queen Anne's County rail rehabilitation identified in the Maryland State Rail Plan to stabilize rail corridor and improve safety; retain existing rail customers and create opportunity to attract new customers; and improve efficiency of rail system.

The Queen Anne's County Board of Commissioners appreciates your consideration of our priorities and inclusion of them in the Consolidated Transportation Plan. We look forward to working with MDOT to implement these priority transportation projects.

**QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**



Christopher M. Corchiarino, President



James J. Moran



Jack N. Wilson, Jr.



J. Patrick McLaughlin



Philip L. Dumenil