

Mr. James F. Ports, Jr.
Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076

Dear Secretary Ports:

On behalf of the Executive Branch and County Council of Prince George's County (the "County"), please find the attached priority list, this combined expression of the County's most pressing priorities are for your consideration in finalizing the Fiscal Years (FY) 2023-2028 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) for the State of Maryland. With the enactment of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the federal government's new comprehensive National Roadway Safety Strategy, there is much needed relief in the form of more robust funding for traditional formula and discretionary programs, as well as several new discretionary programs. In particular, the County has an interest in the Safe Streets and Roads for All, Areas of Persistent Poverty, and the Bridge Investment Program to mention just a few of the important programs that serve as vital new opportunities. In addition, the County views programs designed to promote electric vehicles and the transition of transit fleet to zero emission vehicles (ZEV) as extremely critical in addressing climate change. The County is enthusiastic about the expanded opportunities as a result of this landmark reauthorization.

Prince George's County continues to advance priorities for a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that will strengthen the County, the Capital region and the state. The County emphasizes projects that further safe system transportation approaches like Vision Zero Prince George's, Zero Emission Fleet Transition, Transit Oriented Development (TOD), and strategies designed to spur economic growth while promoting sustainability, safety, and equity. In addition to forward thinking aspirational programs, dedicated funding is critical to preserving and maintaining County infrastructure and state of good repair needs of our aging roadways, bridges, sidewalks, facilities, and stormwater structures.

The County appreciates important recent improvements at the state-level including programed funding for the planning, design and construction of the **Medical Center Drive Interchange**, additional construction funding for the **Blue Line Corridor Improvements**, and our collaborative efforts for accommodating a new FBI in **Greenbelt or Landover**, as well as the burgeoning joint development projects in **New Carrollton**. Meanwhile, the recently approved Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) Transportation Planning Board (TPB) visualize 2045 shows that by 2045, for those traveling by car, Prince George's County is disproportionately negatively impacted in projected commute time (see attachment). As a result, while recent progress is very much appreciated, dramatic steps must now be taken with regard to the County's priority projects.

The widening gap within the Washington Region between East and West has become even more pronounced. As noted, by the year 2045, recent analysis provided by the TPB shows increased congestion of vehicular traffic in Prince George's County, which is far greater than any

other jurisdiction in the Region. This not only negatively affects Prince George's County, but directly impacts the long-term economic well-being of the State. While there is not a singular solution, working with Regional and interjurisdictional partners, emphasizing investment in addressing the jobs and housing imbalance is critical. A concerted and meaningful focus on Transit Oriented Development around the 15 Metro Stations in Prince George's County is integral to address equity, congestion and sustainability in the Washington Region. While this issue is larger than just transportation, it is a key component. The County looks forward to continued partnership and the State's leadership in addressing this vital matter and to prompt action.

The County also appreciates the efforts of the State to get the **Purple Line** project back on track, but it is imperative to also do so as expeditiously as possible, to lessen community impact, while stressing pedestrian safety and the aesthetics of the alignment. To that concern, as the Purple Line is a light rail facility designed to enhance access for people walking, biking and using transit taking into account that many of the segments in Prince George's County are among those with the highest pedestrian and bicycle fatality and crash rates in the State. Therefore, it is imperative to recognize the increase in crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists and encourage continued partnership and additional investment to enhance safety improvements and countermeasures on local and state roadways in the County. Specifically, we urge integration of critical elements recommended by M-NCPPC (MD 193 SPACES report) and the County, including sidewalk and bicycle facilities where they currently do not exist in that segment and other portions of the alignment (i.e., along MD 410 Veterans Parkway). In addition, it is critical to not delay these vital safety improvements until completion of the project, urgent attention is needed now, so any improvements in this regard that can be made sooner rather than later, should be. The County looks forward to working with the State and the Concessionaire on the path forward for expeditious completion of the project, advancing safety both during construction and operations once in revenue service.

The County requests that the State directs its resources toward projects that enhance community revitalization, promote economic development, increase transit access, reduce congestion, and improve roadway safety for all users. As we do these things, it is also important that critical elements of maintenance, including care of medians and trash removal are carried out effectively.

The projects expressed are some of the key priorities for the County and cover a range of transportation issues and areas in the draft FY 2023-2028 CTP which include, the following:

VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- **Vision Zero Prince George's Multimodal Enhancements on State-Maintained Roadways:** Both Prince George's County and the State of Maryland are Vision Zero jurisdictions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been confronted even more clearly by the limitations and opportunities provided by our built environment. Unfortunately, there is an overall trend showing an increase in fatalities and serious injuries, particularly involving pedestrians, in the State and Region. We are grappling with the risks to vulnerable road users and how we can effectively respond. The County and the State collaborate in implementing Vision Zero. However, much more is needed as the data shows a preponderance of these crashes are at night and along State maintained high-

speed arterial roadways. In working with SHA, District 3, to advance the Multiagency Vision Zero Working Group, we focus on improving specific high pedestrian crash corridors as part context-driven design. We are concerned that MD 193 has been omitted from SHA's list of identified priority corridors.

We are adding a new section to the County List, the County's High Injury Network (HIN). The [Prince George's County High Injury Network \(HIN\)](#), encompass one-mile segments of roads with the greatest severity of bike and pedestrian crashes. Each of the HIN corridors are located within Equity Emphasis Areas (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments) with most crashes occurring in urban areas reflecting higher concentrations of low-income and minority populations.

TRANSIT/WMATA/MULTI-MODAL

- **Medical Center Drive Interchange/Blue Line Corridor Initiative Improvements:** The Blue Line Corridor and Medical Center Drive are integral to the new University of Maryland Regional Medical Center, the gateway to the new downtown Largo, and the Blue Line Corridor. The County appreciates the appropriation of State funding towards improvements to local infrastructure, now that the Medical Center Drive Interchange is the CTP, we look forward to expeditiously advancing the planning and design of this critical project and the other elements in Largo and Blue Line Corridor that will best enable unlocking the full potential of this corridor. As a part of these improvements, it is vital to ensure a smooth and efficient system for delivery of the Central Avenue (MD 214) Complete Streets or other critical projects in this corridor.
- **New Carrollton:** With continued investment in this vital TOD, which will soon serve as the beginning of the Purple Line, it is essential to maximize the full potential of this regional infrastructure nexus. With the incoming light rail, existing MARC and Amtrak Stations, and the Joint Development project involving WMATA and the State, additional funding is needed to enhance much needed connectivity, environmental treatments, and streetscaping.
- **Downtown Largo Lottsford and McCormick/ Blue Line Corridor Improvements:** To continue catalyzing development in the Blue Line Corridor, and specifically in Downtown Largo, the County and WMATA have anticipated development of several parcels that sit between the Metro and the government civic center. To facilitate development of the parcels, infrastructure improvements - including relocation of WMATA stormwater and track access facilities, as well as construction of two new public streets to create better multimodal connections through the properties to existing streets - need to be built.
- **Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Headquarters: I-95/Greenbelt Metro Access; Landover Improvements:** The County appreciates the highly coordinated and cooperative effort with the Governor's Office, MDOT and SHA in aggressively advancing these two sites as being optimally positioned for selection by the General Services Administration (GSA) as the preferred site for a new FBI Headquarters. Funding to complete design of the Greenbelt interchange and in working together with Federal and development team partners in readying both the Greenbelt and Landover

sites. Re-locating the principal facility for the FBI in Prince George's County is an essential part of the larger need to add much needed employment opportunities near where so many of the employees reside. We look forward to our continued efforts to ensure that both the Greenbelt and Landover locations are appropriately funded with the supporting infrastructure necessary for a successful bid and most importantly, a facility that will best serve the needs and interests of both the State and County.

- **Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Funding:** Transit systems have been particularly hard hit during the pandemic. To address the recovery and the post-COVID 19 environment, sustained funding for the WMATA system is essential. While WMATA has been beset with numerous issues, a new era of leadership serves as an important opportunity to ensure that both the Metrorail and Metrobus systems receive the support that they need for success. An increased focus on Transit Oriented Development through the Joint Development Process and overall coordination are essential to the health and vibrancy of both WMATA and the County.
- **TheBus:** Prince George's County operates "The Bus" a transit system independent of WMATA and the system faces similar difficulties during the pandemic. More robust funding is needed for the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) programmed for Prince George's County. The County effort to rehabilitate the existing facility, initiating the process for a new LEED certified facility, and making the successful transition to Zero Emission Buses and related infrastructure are central to the County's vision for a more comprehensive, climate friendly and efficient delivery of transit services. Enhanced funding is critical to meet not only existing needs, but to enable future growth while addressing new efficiencies, technologies and climate change.
- **Southern Maryland Rapid Transit:** The Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT), proposed fixed guideway project along the MD5/US-301 corridor from Prince George's County to Charles County, needs to be advanced. As the Maryland General Assembly has approved a funding mechanism that matches State funding with Federal Funds, and the first \$10 million has been secured, the County looks forward to working together with Charles County and the State to utilize this funding for the first phase of the SMRT NEPA process. Through the 2021 General Assembly Session language, there is a clear path forward. Securing the remaining funding needed to complete the remaining project planning and design elements for the projects so they can move into construction is critical for this vital and burgeoning corridor.
- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT):** Prince George's County is finalizing a Feasibility Study, under the auspices of a State Innovation Transportation Innovation Grant (STIG), that demonstrated five routes for advancement as BRT. Continual funding will allow Prince George's County to advance the projects from study corridors to functioning BRT. Moving into the next phase of planning is critical to meet the needs of County residents, but also effectively connect to neighboring jurisdictions in Virginia and Montgomery County, which are aggressively pursuing their own initiatives.
- **Transit Oriented Development:** Placing an emphasis on bringing jobs closer

to housing is central to a long-term development and sustainability strategy for the County, the State and the Region. Prince George's County appreciates MDOT advancing previously requested TOD designations. However, five additional TOD's need to be added in the short-term to the State Designated TOD list. Realigning the State list to be consistent with County plans as well as aggressively advancing projects at all TOD's including Greenbelt, New Carrollton, Branch Avenue and the Largo/Blue Line Corridor is critical to sustainable economic development for the County, the State and the Region.

- **Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) I--495 Southside Express Lanes Study (I-495 SEL Study):** As Prince George's County is very supportive of greater connectivity within the Region. The County is concerned with the current VDOT SEL Study, as it does not appear to provide for continuity of service on the Maryland side of this study. As this project ends just west of the MD 210 interchange, and the MDOT Managed Lanes Study (currently on hold) ends just east of MD 5, there is a significant gap between the two studies. Prince George's County requests assurance that any subsequent projects supported by the County that may involve this gap is sufficiently covered by planning documents to ensure optimal expedition of said project and not be delayed due to a lack of documentation and to be made aware of which documents offer that assurance.

In addition, the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (WWB) Project Record of Decision (ROD) stated that the "HOV lanes and a shoulder are of a sufficient width and structural strength to allow for their future MDOT's support in advocating for the incorporation of transit alternatives into the final VDOT I-495 SEL Study. The case for including efficient, reliable transit as part of the current Study is amplified by the point that the Woodrow Wilson Bridge was constructed to structurally support rail transit. In addition, WMATA has recently concluded a long-range plan for their system which involves an option that involves a new WMATA Blue Line using the WWB. As the Maryland jurisdiction most directly impacted by this project, the County seeks MDOT's support of the incorporation of transit and advocacy of the interests of Maryland and Prince George's County residents.

STATE ROADS & HIGHWAYS

- **MD 210 (Palmer Road at Livingston Road West Interchange):** With the long-awaited completion of the Kerby Hill Road interchange, the County looks forward to expeditious advance of the subsequent interchanges as crucial to improve safety on this dangerous roadway. The County appreciates the coordinated effort in advancing a shared use bicycle-pedestrian corridor as well as planning of the next interchange.
- **MD4 at Suitland Parkway:** During the CTP Tour in 2020, the County expressed extreme displeasure regarding the delays, scale backs, and construction issues that have befallen this project. The County is pleased that the state has reinitiated the project and restored the flyover to the design as originally planned. However, given delays and inconvenience the community faces, it is imperative that SHA quickly complete this project.

- **US 1, Baltimore Avenue (MD 193 to I-95/495):** The County appreciates the State advancing Phase I of this vital project through the current construction process. The County is now looking to the State to quickly fund and advance the subsequent phases.
- **MD 197, Collington Road (US 50 to MD 450):** The County appreciates the renewed study of the widening MD 197 from US 50 to MD450 and a context sensitive design that provides both greater capacity and features designed to manage speed and enhance safety. The County appreciates the inclusion of funding for this project in the Draft CTP to advance planning and design and looks forward to subsequently programming this project for construction.
- **MD 223 Piscataway Road/Woodyard Road (MD 4 to Steed Road):** The County wants to call attention to the need for widening of MD 223. Specifically, much needed improvements at the intersection with Brandywine Road/Old Branch Avenue. Action is needed to advance this long-standing project to widen this intersection (the “BK Miller Intersection”), per the County Master Plan of Transportation and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) plans to widen Brandywine Road from 2 lanes to 4 lanes, as stipulated in County Master Plans.

The passage of the BIL presents new and exciting opportunities for the County and the State. We look forward to further collaborating with the Maryland Department of Transportation to support a comprehensive multimodal transportation program. Expeditious advance of the noted priority projects will strengthen Prince George’s County, the region, and the State of Maryland. We thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Angela Alsobrooks
County Executive

Calvin S. Hawkins, II
County Council Chair

The Honorable Calvin S. Hawkins, II, Chair, Prince George’s County Council
 The Honorable Sydney Harrison, Vice-Chair, Prince George’s County Council
 Tara H. Jackson, Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive
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 Michael D. Johnson, Acting Director, Department of Public Works and Transportation
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Attachments (2)