



Todd M. Turner  
Chair  
District 4

May 12, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing on behalf of the Prince George's County Council to express my strong support for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) transportation planning grant application being submitted jointly by Prince George's County, Charles County and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). The funding from this grant will be used to complete a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) project. This will provide a separated, high-capacity transit line in this rapidly-growing corridor, and will help to transform the greater Washington, DC region.

Prince George's and Charles counties have advanced several mixed-use, transit-oriented centers along the corridor, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (MWCOC) long-range transportation plan forecasts significant population and employment growth in the area. Today there are 5.7 million people living in the National Capital Region, which is expected to grow to over 6.9 million by 2045. As travel demand along the SMRT corridor increases, a separated, high-capacity transit system is essential to accommodate the demand.

Growing our County, State and region in a manner that promotes economic development, while getting cars off the road and reducing congestion, will take a project of the size and scope of the SMRT. This rapid transit project will provide the type of transportation alternatives that this region desperately needs, as the corridor is one of the most congested in the entire country and its residents experience among the longest commute times. The combination of creating a sustainable option to sitting in traffic, promoting walkable, bikeable access to stations, and its potential as an economic game changer, makes this an ideal project.

This collaborative nature of this application demonstrates the project's substantial benefits for Charles County, Prince George's County, and the State of Maryland. I urge you to favorably consider the SMRT project and invest in this transformational initiative.

Sincerely,

Todd M. Turner,  
Council Chair  
Prince George's County Council

cc: The Honorable Angela D. Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Executive  
The Honorable Gregory Slater, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation  
The Honorable Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President, Board of Charles County Commissioners  
The Honorable Joanne C. Benson, Chair, Prince George's County Senate Delegation  
The Honorable Erek Barron, Chair, Prince George's County House Delegation  
The Honorable Calvin S. Hawkins, II, Vice-Chair, Prince George's County Council  
The Honorable Mel Franklin, Member, Prince George's County Council  
The Honorable Monique Anderson-Walker, Member, Prince George's County Council  
The Honorable Sydney J. Harrison, Member, Prince George's County Council  
Major F. Riddick, Jr., Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive  
Floyd E. Holt, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive  
Terry L. Bellamy, Director, Prince George's Department of Public Works and Transportation  
Martin L. Harris, Deputy Director, Prince George's Department of Public Works and Transportation  
Gwendolyn T. Clerkley, Deputy Director, Prince George's Department of Public Works and Transportation  
Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Chair, Prince George's County Planning Board, M-NCPPC  
Andree Green Checkley, Esquire, Prince George's County Planning Department, M-NCPPC  
Kevin Quinn, Administrator, Maryland Transit Administration