

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2007 Legislative Session

Resolution No. CR-59-2007

Proposed by Council Members Dernoga

Introduced by Council Members Dernoga, Bland, Turner, Olson, Campos and Harrington

Co-Sponsors Council Members Dean and Knotts

Date of Introduction July 24, 2007

RESOLUTION

1 A RESOLUTION concerning the

2 Inter County Connector

3 For the purpose of expressing and restating the Prince George's County Council's long-standing

4 opposition to construction of the Inter County Connector (ICC) on the basis that the ICC will

5 further sprawl development, and thus cause or exacerbate an increase in vehicle miles traveled,

6 shift jobs away from Prince George's County, and cause substantial local and regional

7 environmental impact and contribute negatively to climate change, and that there is a lack of

8 need for the ICC, that the cost of it is too great and that there are reasonable and better

9 transportation alternatives that will reduce sprawl development and its impacts.

10 WHEREAS, the 2006 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) published by the Maryland

11 State Highway Administration (SHA), Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA) and Federal

12 Highway Administration (FHWA), the ICC would generate 5,000 acres of new growth beyond

13 that programmed in the region's county master plans, and

14 WHEREAS, most of that new growth would be suburban sprawl in outlying areas and in

15 green fields that are relatively remote from public transit and other basic services and

16 infrastructure, thereby increasing fiscal and economic costs to local governments; and

17 WHEREAS, land use experts familiar with the ICC have predicted that it could generate

18 even substantially more new growth beyond the growth already programmed into the region's

19 county master plans; and

20 WHEREAS, three agency studies in 10 years (the 1997 Draft EIS published by the SHA

21 and FHWA, the 2001 Transportation Policy Report (TPR) published by the Maryland-National

22 Capital Park and Planning Commission, and the 2006 EIS published by the SHA and FHWA) all

1 have shown that the ICC would not reduce congestion on I-95, the Beltway, I-270, or most local
2 roads, and would not reduce average automobile commute times; and

3 WHEREAS, those same agency studies have shown that the ICC would increase projected
4 vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, in direct conflict with regional, state and federal policy
5 goals to reduce growth in vehicle use; and

6 WHEREAS, the 2006 EIS found that the ICC would increase traffic on several Beltway
7 segments and on numerous major commuter routes in Montgomery County used by many Prince
8 George's County residents commuting to work; and

9 WHEREAS, the Brookings Institution report, *A Region Divided*, found that the Washington
10 region is divided by jobs, income, and economic opportunity, with the eastern half, including
11 much of Prince George's County, facing a lack of jobs, economic opportunity and investment,
12 while the western portion of the region, including Montgomery County, experiences rapid job
13 growth and robust investment, and receives a disproportionate share of the region's high-paying
14 jobs; and

15 WHEREAS, a 2001 report by the Council of Governments found that the expansion of I-
16 270 in the late 1980's coincided with a shift of job growth away from Washington, DC and
17 Prince George's County to the I-270 corridor; and

18 WHEREAS, these economic and social disparities continue and would be deepened by
19 construction of the ICC as it draws economic investment and jobs out of Prince George's County
20 to the I-270 corridor; and

21 WHEREAS, these unnecessary regional imbalances in jobs and investments create and
22 worsen a situation in which Prince George's County residents must spend more money and more
23 time making long automobile commutes to well-paying jobs in the western side of the region,
24 with all of the concomitant impacts on their finances, their quality of life, their ability to spend
25 time with their families and in their communities, their health, and the environment; and

26 WHEREAS, the March 2007 report published by 1000 Friends of Maryland – *The*
27 *Intercounty Connector: Financial, Economic and Regional Development Costs and Choices* –
28 summarizes a large and growing body of evidence that demonstrates that new highway capacity
29 such as the ICC tends to shift jobs and investments rather than generating new jobs and
30 investments; and

31 WHEREAS, that same March 2007 report presents specific analyses finding that the ICC

1 would draw economic investment and jobs out of Prince George's County and the region's urban
2 core to Montgomery County and the I-270 corridor; and

3 WHEREAS, every proposed alignment for the ICC would destroy or severely damage
4 parks, mature forest, wetlands, floodplains, streams, rivers (especially the Anacostia River), and
5 human communities; and

6 WHEREAS, the damage caused by the ICC to parks, natural habitat, communities and
7 public health cannot be fully or adequately mitigated; and

8 WHEREAS, federal agencies have twice before (in the 1980s and 1990s) rejected an
9 alignment that is essentially the same as the alignment now being pursued by MDOT after a fast-
10 tracked environmental review conducted under the Ehrlich administration; and

11 WHEREAS, where the alignment chosen by the Bush and Ehrlich administrations and now
12 being pursued by MDOT deviates from the "Master Plan Alignment", it does so at the expense
13 of communities; and

14 WHEREAS, Prince George's County, Montgomery County, Maryland, and the federal
15 government, and other agencies, must by state and federal law make timely progress toward
16 restoring the Anacostia River, the Potomac River, the Chesapeake bay and their tributaries, and
17 have pledged to work cooperatively to restore these waters and watersheds; and

18 WHEREAS, efforts to restore these vital waters and watersheds have not met statutory
19 mandates and are falling negligently behind in attaining objectives set by the Anacostia
20 Watershed Restoration Agreement in 1999 and the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council in 2000;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, the ICC's direct, indirect and cumulative destructive impacts on open space,
23 parks, forests, stream valleys, wetlands and floodplains cannot be fully mitigated and would
24 undermine efforts to restore the waters named above; and

25 WHEREAS, MDOT is seeking to exempt itself from measures developed to protect the
26 healthiest waters in the Anacostia and Rock Creek watersheds; and

27 WHEREAS, protecting those healthy headwater ecosystems is essential to restoring the
28 Anacostia River and Rock Creek; and

29 WHEREAS, ecosystems and human communities downstream of the ICC's proposed
30 alignment already suffer severe flooding and storm water damage and would be further imperiled
31 through damage to headwaters of the Anacostia and Rock Creek; and

1 WHEREAS, air pollutant emissions from cars, trucks and other vehicles traveling on the
2 ICC would pose a significant threat to human health and would worsen already unhealthy air
3 quality in the Washington region; and

4 WHEREAS, Washington region's air quality fails to meet the federal clean air standard for
5 ground-level ozone, has never met that health-based standard since the U.S. Environmental
6 Protection Agency established it more than 35 years ago, and is listed as being in severe non-
7 attainment for ozone; and

8 WHEREAS, the region's air quality also fails to meet the federal clean air standard for fine
9 particle pollution; and

10 WHEREAS, motor vehicles are major sources of these and other air pollutants that are
11 strongly linked to disease and premature death and that are especially harmful to children, the
12 elderly and people with certain diseases; and

13 WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finds that Prince George's County
14 and Montgomery County have some of the highest concentrations in the country of toxic and
15 carcinogenic air pollutants generated by motor vehicles; and

16 WHEREAS, global warming is an issue of increasingly urgent local, state, national and
17 international concern, with a large and growing consensus among scientists and policy makers
18 that we must reduce greenhouse gas emissions sharply and soon, perhaps by 80 percent by the
19 year 2050;

20 WHEREAS, studies predict that global warming will increase overall precipitation and
21 increase extreme weather and severe storms in the Mid-Atlantic region; and

22 WHEREAS, studies indicate the higher temperatures due to global warming pose a
23 significant threat to public health due to increased heat stress, increased pollen and mold
24 production, increased vector-borne disease, and increased air pollution; and

25 WHEREAS, increased motor vehicle use generated by the ICC would lead to increased
26 greenhouse gas emissions and undermine efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions; and

27 WHEREAS, numerous agency studies have shown that projected trips in Prince George's
28 and Montgomery counties would be highly varied in origin and destination and do not justify the
29 need for a continuous East-West highway; and

30 WHEREAS, numerous agency studies have shown that the region's dominant travel
31 patterns are and, even with the ICC, will continue to be radial, toward and away from the District

1 of Columbia; and

2 WHEREAS, transportation modeling from the 2006 EIS indicates that an exceedingly small
3 percentage of Prince George's County commuters would use the ICC on a regular basis while
4 more than 15 percent would travel to destinations served by the Purple Line; and

5 WHEREAS, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) estimates that building
6 the proposed ICC would cost more than \$3 billion; and

7 WHEREAS, the cost of building the ICC may be considerably more because MDOT has
8 not published a revised cost estimate in nearly three years despite rising labor costs and steeply
9 rising material and energy costs; and

10 WHEREAS, the ICC financing plan diverts \$265 million over four years from Maryland's
11 General Fund, at a time when the state faces large budget shortfalls and many non-transportation
12 programs, including public schools in Prince George's County, lack urgently needed funding;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, the ICC financing plan also diverts \$180 million from Maryland's
15 Transportation Trusts Fund, at a time when many urgently needed transportation projects and
16 programs are being deferred or under-funded; and

17 WHEREAS, Prince George's County and the state face a large and growing inventory of
18 unmet, unfunded transportation needs, including BRAC-related transportation needs currently
19 estimated to exceed \$6 billion; and

20 WHEREAS, the State's reliance on the use of Garvey Bonds to close funding gaps for the
21 ICC places the remaining un-built inventory of Federal aid eligible highways needs throughout
22 the state and within the County in jeopardy for the life of the bonds and labels Maryland as one
23 of the minority of states in the nation that accepts unsustainable debt and deficit spending to
24 finance its federal aid highway construction program; and

25 WHEREAS, the ICC is competing with the Purple Line, the revitalization of Route 1 and
26 Route 5, and many other projects for the many of the same state and federal dollars; and

27 WHEREAS, the state's continued neglect of Route 1 has contributed to unsafe conditions
28 along that busy thoroughfare and may have contributed to numerous pedestrian deaths on Route
29 1 in recent years; and

30 WHEREAS, Maryland could redirect most of the state and federal dollars currently
31 programmed for the ICC to transit projects, road and bridge rehabilitation or replacement or

1 other urgent needs; and

2 WHEREAS, MDOT has not yet fixed the tolls that it plans to charge on the ICC, but
3 estimated in the 2006 EIS that a peak-hour, end-to-end, round-trip commute on the ICC would
4 cost more than \$7 per day in 2010, or more than \$1700 annually; and

5 WHEREAS, an analysis by Environmental Defense has found that a toll at or near this level
6 would benefit the upper-income commuters while very few low income and lower middle-
7 income commuters could afford to use the ICC; and

8 WHEREAS, a toll at or near this level would be unaffordable to many Prince Georgians,
9 thereby deepening the already deep regional divide; and

10 WHEREAS, two studies (the 2001 TPR published by the M-NCPPC and the 2005
11 alternatives analysis published by local, state and national environmental organizations) have
12 shown that alternatives that reduce sprawl, balance jobs and housing, improve community and
13 land use planning; and expand public transit would cause far less damage than the ICC, cost less
14 than the ICC, and outperform the ICC on a range of transportation measures; and

15 WHEREAS, on December 14, 2001, the Prince George's County Council, County
16 Executive and Chairman of the Prince George's County Transportation Oversight Committee
17 submitted a Joint Signature letter on State Transportation Priorities to the Secretary of the
18 Maryland Department of Transportation, supporting project planning for alternatives to the
19 construction of the ICC between I-95 and I-270, including an East-West Link between US 29
20 and US 1 and transit service improvements; and

21 WHEREAS, the Prince George's County Council, sitting as the District Council under the
22 Regional District Act, has authority over the development and approval of Master Plans that
23 provide the basis for land use and related transportation decisions in Prince George's County;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, the County Council adopted its resolution CR-32-2003 on June 10, 2003,
26 expressing the Council's opposition to the construction of the ICC and supporting alternatives
27 including link, intersection, and transit improvements; and

28 WHEREAS, the County Council desires to reiterate its opposition to the construction of the
29 ICC.

30 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Prince George's
31 County, Maryland, that the Council opposes the construction of the ICC between I-95 and I-270

1 on its proposed Master Plan alignment as well as any alternative alignments that are not shown in
2 the Master Plan and supports alternatives to the ICC, including: improved community and land
3 use planning; improved and expanded bus and rail transit, improved bicycle and pedestrian
4 access; targeted link and intersection improvements; improved and expanded freight rail and
5 intercity passenger rail; and local corridor and community revitalization, particularly in the
6 region's core.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon the effective date of this resolution, it shall be
8 transmitted by the Clerk of the Council to the Governor, Federal Highway Administration, State
9 Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation and Maryland-National
10 Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Adopted this 25th day of September, 2007.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Camille A. Exum
Chair

ATTEST:

Redis C. Floyd
Clerk of the Council