



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT


THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION


MCPB
ITEM NO. _____
10-26-06


October 19, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Gwen Wright, Acting Chief 
County-wide Planning Division

Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief 
Transportation Planning

FROM: Larry Cole: 301-495-4528, for the Park and Planning Department 

DISCUSSION: Consolidated Transportation Program
Maryland Department of Transportation
FY2007-FY2012
and
County Transportation Priorities

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) has released its draft FY2007-FY2012 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) and will hold the Tour briefing of state and local officials on November 2, 2006 at 7 p.m. in the Montgomery County Council Office Building (COB), Third Floor Auditorium. While no Council meetings are scheduled between the date of the Board's discussion and the Tour date, the Board may transmit its comments to the Council members for their consideration in making their comments to MDOT officials at the Tour.

The Montgomery County State Delegation will be holding its public meeting on the draft CTP on November 16, 2006 at 7 p.m. in the COB Third Floor Auditorium.

Purpose of today's discussion

Staff would like to brief the Board on the changes in the draft CTP, but more importantly, to begin a discussion on the County's priorities. Two years ago, the County's list of transportation priorities for new starts on State projects was expanded into the County's ten-year transportation program to encompass many County projects also.

Given the broad scope of the ten-year program, staff believes that a general assessment is needed to ensure that it accurately reflects the County's needs and priorities not just in transportation, but in furthering the County's overall planning goals. *We recommend that you provide us comments on the information included herein and send recommendations to the Council in early January after staff prepares more specifics on the items you request during your discussion of this item.*

The draft CTP

Base Realignment and Closures

The draft CTP includes a new section that discusses the creation of the Maryland Military Strategic Planning Council and identifies projects as BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) initiatives. One of those initiatives is a new study in the Development and Evaluation Program for a Green Line Extension in Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties from the current terminus at Greenbelt to BWI Airport. The funding for this study in FY2007 and FY2008 is shown as \$2 million and is shown as a BRAC initiative associated with the expected large increase in staffing at Fort Meade.

This new transit study has been added with a quick start while the Bi-County Transitway and Corridor Cities Transitway, the latter identified as a BRAC initiative associated with the Bethesda National Naval Medical Center (NMC), have been pushed back (see below).

The MD28/MD198 corridor study is identified as a BRAC initiative associated with Fort Meade. No change in funding is shown.

The Intercounty Connector is identified as a BRAC initiative associated with the Bethesda NMC and is shown with \$2.45 billion in construction funds programmed through FY2012. The choice of association with NMC rather than Fort Meade may have been a political one to show more funding for a Montgomery County facility in this section of the CTP. The Maryland Transportation Authority is the State agency that would implement this project.

Transit

The draft CTP shows the following changes for transit projects in Montgomery County:

- Silver Spring Transit Center has \$33.3 million in additional funding because of a cost estimate increase and an increase in Federal funding.
- The Metro escalator program shows a cost increase of \$7 million in part to fund remote monitoring capability.
- The Montgomery County Local Bus program shows an additional \$2.2 million due to the addition of FY2012.
- The timeline for constructing the Takoma Langley Transit Center has been stretched an additional year due to delays in acquiring right-of-way from the shopping center owner.

- The completion of the Bi-County Transitway study has been pushed back from FY2008 to FY2010.
- The completion of the Corridor Cities Transitway Study has been pushed back from FY2007 to FY2009.

Highways

The draft CTP has no new major highway projects in Montgomery County, with the notable exception of the Intercounty Connector. The changes in the existing projects are limited to reflecting differences in the current cost estimates due to inflation. There is a possibility that a revenue increase will be passed by the legislature, but the amount of the additional funding cannot be known until Spring 2007.

The County's priorities as they now stand

A copy of the Council's current ten-year transportation plan, dated Summer 2006, is shown as Attachment 1. The ten-year plan includes both County and State projects. This list is updated every year and candidates from the list are chosen as the County's priorities for State projects, which are forwarded every year in a letter to the Montgomery County Delegation, jointly signed by the Council and the Executive. The last joint letter was sent on November 2, 2005 and is shown as Attachment 2. Council staff's expectation is that the Council will not meet to discuss the priorities until January or early February, after the new Council and Executive have been sworn in and after the Transportation and Environment Committee, which will have at least one new member, is able to meet.

Council action on the CTP earlier this year

Earlier this year, the Council voted to add \$160 million in County funding to accelerate State and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) capital projects that will add road or transit capacity. Except for the first four projects appropriated for FY07 (see below), none of these funds will be spent unless there is a cost-sharing agreement with the State – i.e., the County will not appropriate funds unless there is a suitable match of newly programmed money from the State. ***Only projects in the most recent Council/Executive joint priority letter will be eligible for such funding.***

The Council appropriated \$19,555,000 for FY07 for four projects, even without the promise of a State match. By the time the proposal was put together the state's FY07 budget was already set, and the Council did not want these projects to slip. The amounts appropriated were equal to each project's funding shortfall in FY07. The four projects and appropriations are:

- \$3,916,000 to WMATA for the balance of the \$17,094,000 cost of the second garage at the Glenmont Metro Station;
- \$8,239,000 to State Highway Administration (SHA) for the Georgia Avenue/Randolph Road interchange (most of this would be used for right-of-way acquisition);
- \$2,400,000 to SHA for the I-270/Watkins Mill Road interchange (to be used towards the final design of the interchange); and

- \$5,000,000 to WMATA for the southern entrance to the Bethesda Metro Station (to fund its final design as part of the Bi-County Transitway).

The Glenmont garage and Georgia/Randolph interchange are already in design and nearly “ready to go” except for the fact that they are not currently funded to do so. The I-270/Watkins Mill Road interchange would be a breakout project from the overall I-270/US15 corridor study and currently has developers constructing the roadways leading up to the interchange. The Bi-County Transitway is already in the State’s Development and Evaluation program. By putting additional funds on the table for State projects, the County hopes to persuade SHA to fully fund the projects by making the argument that they would get more “bang for the buck” by doing these projects over others around the state. Howard County has been successful in using this approach.

The other State projects that are currently being considered for partial County funding are:

- Rockville Pike (MD355)/Montrose Parkway interchange
- Woodfield Road (MD124) Widening Phase 2
- Georgia Avenue (MD97)/Brookeville Bypass
- Clopper Road (MD117) Widening Phases 2 and 3

Although the Georgia Avenue (MD97)/Norbeck Road (MD28) interchange is higher on the construction priority list than Clopper Road Widening, the former would cost about twice as much as the latter and there appears to be insufficient funds for both.

Where should we go from here?

While a case could be made for advocating the addition of those segments of the ICC bike path that would not be implemented by the ICC roadway project included in this year’s draft, staff believes that it may not be timely to do so. The Tour date is five days before the general election, when at least three new members of the County Council and a new County Executive will be elected. Members of the House and Senate will also be chosen, including a new Chair of the Montgomery County Senate Delegation. All of these impending changes have served to slow down the schedule on updating the priority list.

Staff believes that the slower schedule this year will provide the Planning Board the best opportunity in the last couple of years for input into the County’s priorities. The County Executive and Council have made a greater effort in the past few years to speak with one voice on the County’s priorities for State projects, but have not provided the Planning Board much of an opportunity lately to take part in these discussions.

Therefore, staff proposes to make recommendations to the Board in December in advance of the Council’s discussions. To shape these recommendations, staff requests that the Board advise us as to what policies should be considered.

Reassessing and updating priorities

When we go beyond the initial list of four projects, staff recommends that the County's ten-year transportation plan and priority list be reassessed. The current ten-year transportation plan is heavily weighted toward highway projects that would increase capacity and reduce congestion. Of the 132 projects listed: 22 are new roads, 19 are road widenings, 18 are new interchanges, 20 are intersection improvements, 11 are bridge replacements, eight are roadway safety improvements, four are commercial revitalization projects, eight are parking garages, 14 are transit projects, and eight are bike paths. Of the 132 projects listed, 41 are noted as being completed. Only one of the completed projects, the Forest Glen Pedestrian Bridge, was non-auto-oriented.

Using the figures from the ten-year plan, rush hour transit ridership will grow by 26,000 additional riders by 2015, but non-transit rush hour trips will grow by 95,000. Therefore, non-transit trips will be growing almost four times as fast as transit trips during the rush hour. Despite the large increase in non-transit trips, rush hour congestion would be reduced from 39.6% to 32.6% by the implementation of the roadway projects in the ten-year plan in its current form.

Even with the transportation improvements that the Board requires of developers as a condition of approval, relief of existing congestion problems and additional capacity to accommodate new development will continue to be significant priorities for the County. But staff believes that the current ten-year plan appears to target too high a percentage of resources to congestion relief and additional SOV capacity and not enough to transit and other modes at a time when the County is rapidly urbanizing.

How projects are prioritized

The Highway Mobility Study has provided the County with a wealth of information and a basis for making rational decisions on prioritizing congestion projects, but there is not as good a basis for prioritizing improvements aimed at improving safety, bicyclist and pedestrian accessibility, or commercial revitalization. Staff believes that we need to avoid selecting congestion and capacity projects just because we have the best tools to evaluate them.

Even with tools to assess projects within each of these areas of concern, we do not have a clear-cut way to help guide the choice of one type of project over another, or to guide choices of transportation projects based on concerns other than the need for additional capacity. One example of a way to guide these choices would be the following.

The State's Priority Funding Areas were created in response to Smart Growth concerns and the State will not fund improvements outside those areas except for reasons of safety. The County's adoption of a similar policy could be one part of a strategy to rank transportation projects in a more comprehensive way other than just their ability to provide additional capacity.

Other similar broad policy goals could also be used to determine the overall selection of transportation projects that would be included in the next update of the ten-year transportation program.

How should we use the County's funds to leverage State funds?

The initial list of State projects to be partially funded with County funds has focused on roadway construction projects in the pipeline. In rethinking the County's priorities however, the question should also be asked: Rather than target capacity projects that SHA would pursue if it had sufficient funds, should we incentivize those projects that SHA has not expressed a great interest in doing on their own?

The Georgia Avenue (MD97) reconstruction in Montgomery Hills has been at the top of the County's priority list to enter the State's Development and Evaluation program since 1999, but has gotten nowhere. It would be a difficult project with lots of coordination needed with property and business owners and utility relocation, but it is the highest volume non-interstate road in the state and the beltway interchange is the highest volume interchange in the state. While the project is listed as a County priority for commercial revitalization, there are significant congestion problems, including the county's most congested intersection at Forest Glen Road (per the latest Highway Mobility Report). That intersection is also one of the state's highest accident locations. There have also been recent requests from the public for a tunnel under Georgia Avenue at this intersection. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed here that the State has so far been unwilling to tackle in a comprehensive way, but has instead implemented smaller projects that have sometimes had inadvertent adverse impacts. *The much-needed comprehensive study and design of the Georgia Avenue/Montgomery Hills project could be funded as part of the Council's new initiative.*

To date, the State has not committed any funding assistance to help implement the ICC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, nor has the State conducted a feasibility analysis to be sure the pieces of the plan not being built as part of the highway project can be implemented. *Full implementation of the ICC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is another "orphan" project that could be funded under this program.*

The unexpected creation by the Council of a large program to fund projects previously seen as being State responsibilities also opens up a new realm of possibilities. Rather than just fund parts of several interchange projects, the County could also contribute to the design and construction of transit projects, such as the Georgia Avenue Busway (estimated to cost \$70 million) or the Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit project (estimated to cost \$41 million). Funding the State studies for these busways would be the first step to getting these projects implemented. The construction of a light rail line between Silver Spring and Bethesda (estimated to cost \$106 million) could be partially funded under this program and become the first link in the Bi-County Transitway. *(The above costs are in 2006 dollars and are not engineer's estimates, but are provided only as ballpark estimates for comparisons to the other projects in Attachment 2.)*

New types of candidates for the County's ten-year transportation plan

Staff would like to point out that there is a disparity in the types of State and County candidates that are on the priority list. The State projects in the CTP by their nature are large projects. The smaller State projects generally get handled at the District level and are not listed individually in the CTP. The County projects in the ten-year transportation plan are generally smaller than the state's projects.

Pedestrian improvements are one example of a type of project that has a small cost on a location-by-location basis, but can have a significant impact for the dollars spent. Each project may not be a priority by itself, but can be aggregated with other such projects into a comprehensive *program* that can be more easily defended as being County priorities.

A number of such programs could be implemented or accelerated to greatly increase safety and quality of life, such as:

- Safe Routes to Schools pedestrian improvements
- Bus Stop Safety Improvements
- Improved lighting on State highways
- Pedestrian improvements in CBD's and other commercial areas

Significant portions of the above programs would be implemented on State highways, but regardless of location, staff believes that these programs are truly countywide programs that should be considered by the Board as new candidates for inclusion on the County's ten-year plan. With the inclusion of County projects, **the ten-year transportation program has become an important document not just for guiding the priorities for State projects in the CTP but also for County projects in the CIP.**

NEXT STEPS

Staff intends to schedule a discussion in December 2006 for the Board on the topic of the County's ten-year transportation plan and the list of priorities for State projects, as a subset of the plan, to be forwarded to the Montgomery County Delegation. We have expressed our thoughts above on overall policies that could be considered in the revisions to these documents, as well as individual items that could be included.

Staff requests that the Board concur with the direction that we are taking in creating an updated list of priorities and provide its guidance on any additional items or policies that should be considered.

LC:gw
Attachments

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS TO BE COMPLETED IN PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY BY YEAR 2015

LIGHT RAIL LINES, BUSWAYS, & BUS RAPID TRANSITWAYS (BRT)

- TR-1 Clarksburg Transit Center
- TR-2 Colesville Rd (US 29) BRT - Burtonsville to Silver Spring
- TR-3 Corridor Cities Transitway - Shady Grove to Clarksburg
- TR-4 Four Corners Transit Center
- TR-5 Georgia Avenue (MD 97) Busway - Glenmont to Olney
- TR-6 Inner Purple Line (light rail) - Bethesda to New Carrollton
- TR-7 Inner Purple Line Spur - Langley Park to White Oak
- TR-8 Olney Transit Center
- TR-9 Randolph Road BRT - Columbia Pike to Rockville Pike
- TR-10 Silver Spring Transit Center
- TR-11 Takoma / Langley Transit Center
- TR-12 University Blvd (MD 193) BRT - Langley Park to Wheaton
- TR-13 Yers Mill Road (MD 586) BRT - Wheaton to Rockville
- TR-14 White Oak Transit Center

PARKING GARAGES AND LOTS

- PK-1 Bethesda / Cheltenham Parking Garage
- PK-2 Damascus Park And Ride Lot
- PK-3 Glenmont Metro Garage
- PK-4 Grosvenor Metro Garage
- PK-5 Norbeck Road Park & Ride Lot Enhancements
- PK-6 Shady Grove Metro Parking Garage
- PK-7 Silver Spring Silver Circle Parking Garage
- PK-8 Silver Spring Town Center Garage

SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

- S4-1 Fairland Road - Columbia Pike to Prince George's Co.
- S4-2 Goshen Road - north of Warfield Road
- S4-3 Layhill / Norwood Roads (MD 182) - Ednor Road to MD 108
- S4-4 Muncester Mill Road - Shady Grove Road to Norbeck Road
- S4-5 Muncester Road - at Rock Creek
- S4-6 Old Columbia Pike - Nalls Lane to East Randolph Road
- S4-7 Quince Orchard Road - Darnestown Rd to Muddy Branch Rd
- S4-8 Travilah Road - Darnestown Road to Duffel Mill Road

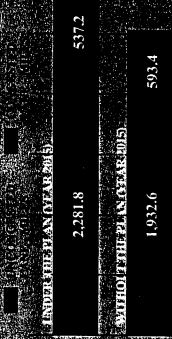
LEGEND

- RD- NEW ROADS
- W- ROAD WIDENINGS
- BR- BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS
- GS- GRADE SEPARATED INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS
- IN- INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS
- BK- BIKE PATHS
- CR- COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION PROJECTS
- TR- LIGHT RAIL LINES, BUSWAYS, & BUS RAPID TRANSITWAYS (BRT)
- PK- PARKING GARAGES AND LOTS
- S4- SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
- COMPLETED WITHIN 6 YEARS
- FUTURE PROJECTS
- PROJECTS COMPLETED
- COMPLETED WITHIN 6 YEARS
- FUTURE PROJECTS

BUS PERIOD AVERAGE SPEED (MPH)



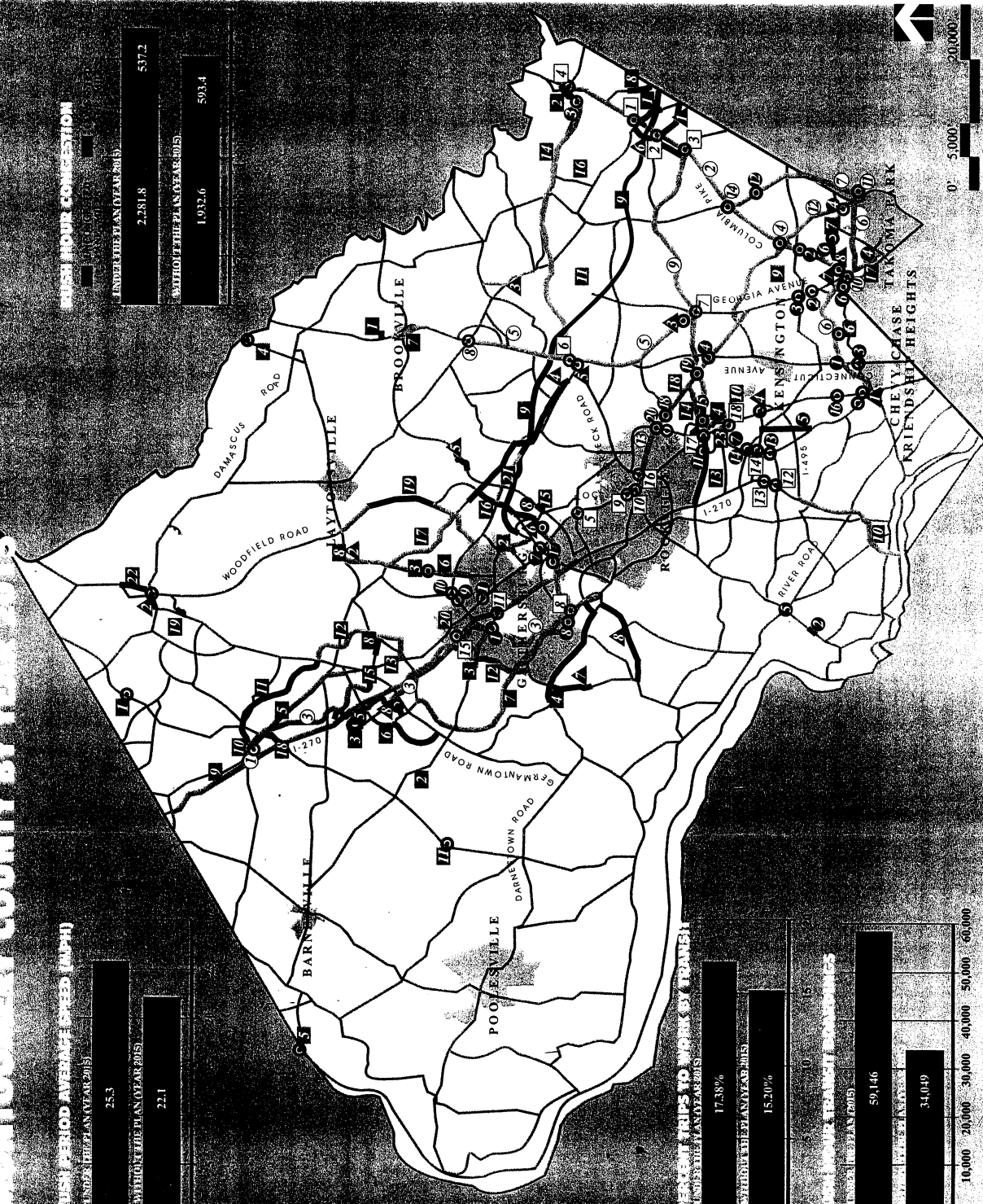
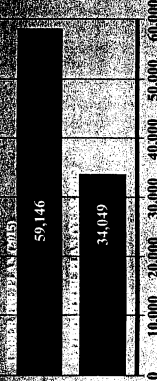
BUS PERIOD CONGESTION



PERCENT TRIPS TO WORK BY TRANSIT



BUS PERIOD TRANSIT BOARDINGS



OTHER WAYS TO GET THE COUNTY MOVING

Our traffic congestion and mobility problems will only partly be solved by building new roads, transit lines, bikeways, and sidewalks. Other supportive programs and policies in the new County Transportation Plan are just as important in addressing these problems.

EXPANDED BUS AND METRORAIL SERVICE

Bus Service. The plan calls for the expansion of Metrobus and Ride On bus service by 50% in the next decade. There are three ways the bus service will expand:

- More routes:** The County will add many more bus routes connecting various points in the Upcounty to the Downcounty and to Virginia via the continuous I-270 HOV lanes and their extension to Tyson's Corner and Dulles Airport. Traveling on these separate lanes, buses will travel at the posted speed limit and not be slowed by congestion. In addition, new local routes will be added in the still-growing areas of Gaithersburg, Germantown, Clarksburg, and the Eastern County.
- More frequent service.** Many bus routes run only every 30 minutes in the rush hours, leaving little schedule flexibility for potential riders. Within the next decade bus service on most routes will run as frequently as every 15 minutes on most routes, and even as often as every 10 minutes on the routes with the heaviest ridership.
- Earlier and later service.** Most routes start after 6 AM in the morning and run only until 10 PM at night on weekdays, and have more limited hours on weekends and holidays. The new plan will start many more routes before 6 AM and extend them until at least midnight on Monday-through-Thursday nights, and until the early morning on Friday and Saturday nights. Weekend hours will also be extended substantially.

The County will also improve the bus service in the following ways:

- All bus stops on major roads will have shelters outfitted with benches, lighting, and real-time schedule information that will display when the next buses will arrive.
- All bus stops will be connected by sidewalks. Some bus stops may be moved to maximize pedestrian access and safety.
- Several intersections on Randolph Road, University Boulevard, US 29, and Veirs Mill Road will be re-designed and traffic signals will be installed and synchronized to allow buses on these highways to bypass points of congestion and speed up their service.
- A discounted rate for two-week and 20-ride Ride On passes will be continued, and the County will press for the same discount for Metrobus service in Montgomery County as well. Seniors will continue to enjoy their traditional discount, and kids will ride free on any Ride On and Metrobus between 2 PM and 7 PM. The County will continue to experiment with providing free and reduced-fare service on selected routes where traffic congestion is particularly acute.

Metrorail service. The plan calls for expanding the number of cars in the Metrorail fleet to provide 8-car trains on the Red Line. The plan also calls for running all trains between Shady Grove and Glenmont through Downtown Washington. Currently, only half the trains during rush hours operate over the entire line; the other half only run between Grosvenor and Silver Spring.

During the next decade access to Metrorail stations will be greatly eased. The County will add more frequent bus service to the stations, and enhanced connections to Metrorail via the Inner Purple Line (at Bethesda and Silver Spring), the Corridor Cities Transitway (at Shady Grove), and the Georgia Avenue Busway (at Glenmont). A second parking garage at Shady Grove is open, a garage at Grosvenor is open, and a second garage at Glenmont will be built within the next couple of years.

MAXIMIZING THE EFFICIENCY AND SAFETY OF THE ROAD NETWORK

The County's traffic management system is the most advanced of its type in the nation. The Advanced Transportation Management System of interconnected and centrally controlled traffic signals and traffic cameras has allowed the County to carry more traffic efficiently than comparable road networks elsewhere. The system will further improve by such means as establishing a roving incident response team that will respond to calls from the Transportation Management Center to tow stalled vehicles from the roadway, and by installing pedestrian "count-down" signals, alerting pedestrians precisely as to how long they will have to cross an intersection safely.

LAND USE

As part of the plan, the Council also gave the green light to an alternative land use policy put forward by the County Planning Board that will use land use decisions to locate more jobs in the White Oak area and more housing and fewer additional jobs the I-270 corridor. In this way more persons will have greater opportunities live closer to where they work. It will also plan a series of transit-oriented communities near Metro stations and bolster activity in Langley Park in conjunction with planning the Purple Line.

Projections show that this land use change, together with expanded transit service and promoting transit-oriented design practices, will reduce cross-county afternoon work trips by 18 percent and increase transit use by as much as 45 percent. It will increase jobs within a half mile of rail stations from 40 percent in 1998 to 60 percent in 2050 and housing within a half mile transit from 12 percent in 1998 to 33 percent in 2050.

BENEFITS FROM THE NEW COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN

By building the projects identified in the new County Transportation Plan, traffic congestion will be reduced and mobility will be improved by Year 2015. The following points compare the results from the new plan compared to merely completing the projects already scheduled for construction.

Travel speeds will be higher and travel time will be lower. Cars will travel at an average speed of 24.0 mph, compared to 22.1 mph if there were no plan. Travel times for certain trips would be dramatically better. Here are forecasted evening rush hour travel times in Year 2015 for selected trips:

	WITHOUT THE PLAN 33 minutes	UNDER THE PLAN 17 minutes
Bethesda - Silver Spring (by transit)		
Bethesda - Germantown (by transit)	79 minutes	51 minutes
Silver Spring - Burtonsville (by transit)	76 minutes	60 minutes
Silver Spring - Olney (by transit)	73 minutes	39 minutes
Silver Spring - Olney (by car)	45 minutes	39 minutes
Burtonsville - Shady Grove West (by car)	40 minutes	29 minutes
Gaithersburg - Norbeck (by car)	29 minutes	22 minutes
Rockville - Clarksburg (by car)	43 minutes	35 minutes

Congestion will be less prominent. Without the plan 39.6% of all rush hour traffic will be traveling in congested conditions upon completion of the plan this will be reduced to 32.6%. It is projected that 23.5% of all traffic lanes will be congested in Year 2015, but under the plan only 19.1% will be congested.

Transit ridership will increase. Under the plan transit ridership will increase by more than 75% in the rush hour, from nearly 34,000 to nearly 60,000. The share of rush hour trips by transit would increase from 15.2% to 17.4%.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S 10 - YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLAN



A blueprint to make a real difference now for Montgomery families...

Dear Neighbor,

Traffic congestion is the number one threat to the quality of life in our Community.

This brochure describes the projects, programs, and policies that the Montgomery County Council intends to implement over the next ten years to address our transportation crisis. It is the largest transportation initiative adopted by a county in the Metro Washington region. This ambitious and wide-ranging \$7 billion plan is designed to relieve traffic congestion with new roads, road improvements, intersection upgrades, more buses, rail, and a new land use policy. Our plan will:

- ☐ build 345 lane miles of additional roadway capacity
- ☐ build 18 grade-separated interchanges and 20 intersection improvements
- ☐ add HOV lanes on I-270 from the I-270 West Spur south to Virginia and on I-270 north from Shady Grove to Frederick County.
- ☐ add express bus service
- ☐ add 144 new buses and increase bus operations by 50 percent
- ☐ add six new transit centers



The Montgomery County Council. Standing (from left to right): George Leventhal, Phil Andrews, Michael Knapp, Thomas Perez, Howard Denis. Sitting (left to right): Marilyn Praisner, Steven Silverman, Michael Subin, Nancy Floreen.

We will tackle east-west congestion by building the Intercounty Connector and by widening MD 28 and MD 198 to four lanes between Norbeck and Burtonsville. Montrose Parkway will relieve congestion in North Bethesda. The Inner Purple Line will link Bethesda and Silver Spring with Langley Park, the University of Maryland at College Park, and the Amtrak Station at New Carrollton. The Corridor Cities Transitway, a busway or light rail line, will connect Clarksburg, Germantown, and Gaithersburg to Shady Grove through our high-tech corridor.

We also gave the green light to an alternative land use policy that would promote greater opportunities for residents to live closer to where they work. We plan for a series of transit-oriented communities near Metro stations.

Relief from traffic congestion does not come cheaply, though. We need more County money and we need much more money from the State. We will work closely with the County Executive to identify more local revenue and with our Annapolis delegation to generate more State funding for transportation.

There is no easy answer to our traffic congestion problem. We have to do more of everything more and better roads, more mass transit, creative land use, and improved traffic demand management strategies. This ambitious, yet realistic, blueprint can make a difference now. It's time to get Montgomery moving.

Attachment 1

George L. Leventhal

George L. Leventhal, President
Montgomery County Council
Summer 2006

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20850
Phone: (240) 777-7900
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council



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ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

November 2, 2005

The Honorable Ida Ruben, Chair
Montgomery County Senate Delegation
422 Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Charles Barkley, Chair
Montgomery County House Delegation
222 Lowe Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Senator Ruben and Delegate Barkley:

We have recently revised the State transportation priorities we transmitted to you on November 4, 2004, based on recent announcements by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and on a review of the Planning Board's new Highway Mobility Report. This letter describes our updated sets of priorities for currently unfunded State transportation projects and planning studies.

We appreciate the State having fully funded the Intercounty Connector for completion by 2010. However, there are four other projects of regional and statewide significance that are most critical and should proceed to completion as quickly as possible. In alphabetical order, they are: the Bi-County Transitway; the Corridor Cities Transitway; the I-270 widening for high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) or high-occupancy-toll (HOT) lanes north of Shady Grove; and the I-495 widening for HOV or HOT lanes between the I-270 West Spur and Virginia. While there are issues to be worked out on important aspects of some of these projects, decisions must be made and funding must be identified promptly to move them forward to completion.

There are also two projects of local importance which require significant changes from what is shown in the Draft 2006-2011 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). These are high priority projects that have been previously identified by the Executive and Council to the State and/or Federal Delegations. They are:

1. Accelerate the start of construction of the interchange of Rockville Pike (MD 355) with Montrose Parkway by two years—from FY 2010 (as shown in the Draft) to FY 2008—in order to permit the most seamless coordination with the County's Montrose Parkway West project, and to cause the least disruption to area residents. Montrose Parkway West is currently under construction; the full cost of this \$68.2 million project is being funded entirely by the County.
2. Provide \$5.26 million in additional funding for the Silver Spring Transit Center to fully fund the 20% match for Federal aid that has been included in the recently approved Federal transportation authorization. This project has undergone a significant increase in scope which is not reflected in the \$41 million funding level as shown in the Draft.



Our priority rankings for projects that will be ready for construction funding during the next six years and are currently in the design or project-planning stages are listed below. The funding to be programmed to complete each project is also indicated as well.

1. Glenmont Metro Garage: State contribution to build a second garage	\$6M
2. Georgia Avenue/Randolph Road: build grade-separated interchange	\$48M
3. I-270/Watkins Mill Road Extended (Phase 1): build grade-separated interchange*	\$103M
4. Woodfield Road: widen to 6 lanes, Midcounty Hwy to Snouffer School Road**	\$60M
5. Georgia Avenue: build 2-lane bypass around Brookeville	\$17M
6. Georgia Avenue/Norbeck Road: build grade-separated interchange	\$75M
7. Clopper Road: improve intersections from I-270 to Seneca Creek State Park	\$39M
8. Spencerville Road: widen to 4 lanes with a median from Old Columbia Pike to US 29	\$30M
9. Norbeck Road: widen to 4 lanes from Georgia Avenue to Layhill Road	\$80M
10. US 29/Fairland Road/Musgrove Road: build grade-separated interchange	\$67M
11. Rockville Pike/Montrose Parkway (Phase 2): build bridge over CSX Railroad***	\$62M
12. I-270/Newcut Road: build grade separated interchange	\$64M
13. Woodfield Road: widen to 6 lanes from Snouffer School Road to Airpark Road and from Fieldcrest Road to Warfield Road**	(see #4) \$115M
14. MD 28/198: widen to 4 lanes from Layhill Rd to Old Columbia Pike	\$54M
15. Veirs Mill Rd/First St: build grade-separated interchange	

* Significant savings may be obtained by dedication of right-of-way by new development.

** The total cost of #4 and #13 is \$60M. Segmented cost estimates are not yet available.

*** Significant savings may be obtained by coordination with the County's Montrose Parkway East project.

The total funding that needs to be programmed to complete these 15 projects is \$820 million. MDOT is already investing over \$43 million to plan, design, and buy land for these projects.

Our priority rankings for highway projects to be added to the Development & Evaluation (D&E) Program are:

1. Georgia Avenue (MD 97): reconstruction in Montgomery Hills
2. Rockville Pike (MD 355)/Cedar Lane: grade-separated interchange
3. Midcounty Highway Extended: construction from Intercounty Connector to Shady Grove Road
4. Frederick Road (MD 355)/Gude Drive: grade-separated interchange
5. Great Seneca Highway (MD 119): flyover at Sam Eig Highway
6. Frederick Road (MD 355): widening from 2000' south of Brink Road to future Frederick Road/Clarksburg Bypass
7. Rockville Pike (MD 355)/Nicholson Lane: grade-separated interchange
8. Frederick Road (MD 355): reconstruction in Old Town Gaithersburg
9. Veirs Mill Road (MD 586)/Randolph Road: grade-separated interchange
10. Veirs Mill Road (MD 586): widening from Twinbrook Parkway to Randolph Road
11. I-270/Gude Drive: grade-separated interchange
12. MD 108 Bypass around Laytonsville

The Honorable Ida Ruben
The Honorable Charles Barkley
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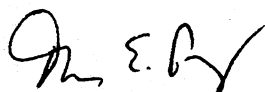
Our priority rankings for transit projects to be added to the D&E Program are:

1. Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) Bus Rapid Transit: Rockville to Wheaton
2. Georgia Avenue (MD 97) Busway: Glenmont to Olney
3. University Blvd. (MD 193) Bus Rapid Transit: Wheaton to Langley Park
4. North Bethesda Transitway: Grosvenor to Montgomery Mall and White Oak Connector from Bi-County Transitway

Studies #1-3 in this list would be coordinated between the State Highway Administration and the Maryland Transit Administration. For these studies we also request that a continuous bikeway be planned throughout their entire lengths.

If you need any clarifications about our recommendations, please contact us.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Perez, President
County Council



Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

DMD:TEP:go

cc: The Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Governor, State of Maryland
Robert L. Flanagan, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation
Derick Berlage, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board