

TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL FOR SOUTHERN MARYLAND

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April 8, 2013

The Honorable Darrell B. Mobley
Acting Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
P.O. Box 548, Mail Stop 200
Hanover, Maryland 21076

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SECRETARY'S OFFICE
DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

RE: Southern Maryland Regional Transportation Priorities

Dear Acting Secretary Mobley:

The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland appreciates the opportunity to present Southern Maryland's Regional Transportation Priorities for inclusion and funding in the FY 2014-2019 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Southern Maryland's priorities reflect consistency and continuity accompanied by regional consensus. Once again, our regional transportation priorities have the endorsement of the Boards of County Commissioners of Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties and were adopted by the Executive Board of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland.

The top regional priorities along with the regionally significant projects, which were identified in the 2008 Southern Maryland Transportation Needs Assessment report prepared by the Commission to Study Southern Maryland Transportation Needs in partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation, continue to be endorsed by all three Southern Maryland Counties. Additionally, the Transit Priority was established in the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study dated August 2010. The 2008 Transportation Needs Assessment is a strategic plan to guide the implementation of transportation system projects to serve our citizens, our military bases, and to maintain the competitiveness of our regional economy. We are pleased that the goals and analysis in the regional report reflect the needs of each of our counties and the region as a whole and provide a foundation for State transportation policy and infrastructure investment in Southern Maryland.

Our Top Regional Priority Highway Project continues to be the Thomas Johnson Bridge replacement accompanied by improvements of the Route 2/4 corridor and MD 235 intersection. This project will relieve commuter congestion, improve safety, help position the Patuxent River Naval Air Station for future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) expansions, improve emergency evacuations, and provide bicycle tourism opportunities between the Three Notch Trail and Solomon's Island. Moreover, construction funding for short-term intersection improvements is also requested. This project has been included in the CTP since FY 2007-2012, and though millions have already been expended for Project Planning this project lapses after 2014. Engineering and construction of the replacement bridge and interchange at MD 2 and 235 will be a multi-million dollar capital investment for which the funding will be appropriated over many years. Therefore, it makes sense to anticipate the expense of this project in the CTP. We urge the continued the recognition of this project that is so vital to the Southern Maryland region by programming incremental funding for



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preliminary engineering and/or right-of-way acquisition commencing in the FY 2015 budget year. In light of the millions already expended it does not make sense to allow this to languish.

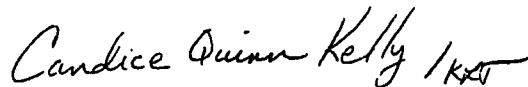
Our number one Regional Transit Priority is the Southern Maryland Transit Project to provide fixed-route, high-capacity transit service in the MD 5 / US 301 corridor from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf / White Plains in Charles County. We appreciate the continued efforts of the Maryland Transit Administration in working with Charles County to advance the planning and development of this Light Rail Transit service to Southern Maryland and are most pleased with the cooperation and support from Prince George's County. While Charles County continues to implement the appropriate land-use strategies through the adoption of the preferred alignment and rezonings in support of the Southern Maryland Transit Corridor, we look forward to the inclusion of project planning funding and future to right-of-way preservation. As you know, we have the fastest growing commuter bus ridership in the State serving the State's fastest growing region for the third decade running, so this Light Rail Transit investment will have a significant impact in the improvement of air quality as well as enhancing our economic vitality.

Southern Maryland's Regionally Significant Projects include:

- Construction of a controlled access highway option for US 301 in Waldorf that will balance the needs of the residential and business communities while minimizing the impacts to cultural, social, and natural resources; and,
- Enhancement of Commuter Bus Services along with the development of additional Park & Ride lots in Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties; as well as,
- The upgrade of MD Route 2/4 from the southern intersection of MD 765 (Main Street) at Industry Lane to north of Auto Drive that provides widening to six lanes with access controls and turning restrictions along with an underpass in the vicinity of Fox Run Boulevard.

It is vitally important that progress continue with funding of the planning, engineering and right-of-way acquisition for these long-standing and urgently needed regional priorities during the coming year, in spite of the revenue limitations. We are confident that the Maryland Department of Transportation will do everything possible to make sure that essential steps are included in the FY 2014-2019 CTP to position these priorities for future implementation. We thank you for your consideration and affirmative action with respect to these projects for the Southern Maryland region

With sincere regards,



Candice Quinn Kelly
Chair
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland

CQK/KLT:kit

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cc: The Honorable Sally Y. Jameson, Maryland House of Delegates, Chair - Southern Maryland Delegation
The Honorable Pat Nutter, President, Calvert County Commissioners
The Honorable Candice Quinn Kelly, President, Charles County Commissioners
The Honorable Jack Russell, President, St. Mary's County Commissioners
Elaine Lancaster, Acting Executive Director, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland