

# COMMISSIONERS FOR SOMERSET COUNTY

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November 4, 2015

Pete K. Rahn, Secretary of Transportation  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
P. O. Box 548  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, Maryland 21076

## **Re: Somerset County – Priority Letter for Recommended Transportation Improvements**

Dear Secretary Rahn:

Congratulations on your appointment as Maryland's Secretary of Transportation. Your experience leading state transportation agencies nation-wide makes you ideally suited to address transportation issues here in Maryland, and we look forward to working with you, and meeting with you next week during the Annual Tour.

Each year, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) asks counties to submit letters prioritizing transportation projects for possible inclusion in the upcoming Consolidated Transportation Program prepared by MDOT.

In response to this request, the Somerset County Commissioners have met and prepared a list of proposed transportation improvements in the County for your consideration. We would be happy to discuss these in further detail during the Annual Tour, or another time at your convenience. They are listed as follows:

### **ENHANCEMENTS**

#### **1. Westover to Crisfield Bike Trail (adjacent to MD 413)**

##### Description:

This project consists of utilizing a 60 foot-wide right-of-way located between the County's regional recreational complex at Westover and extending to the outskirts of Crisfield for a bike trail. This State-owned right-of-way was formerly a rail line and is 13.5 miles in length. Once the trail approaches Crisfield, it would transition into a dedicated bike lane along MD 413.

Need:

This bike trail will encourage tourism and provide an economic benefit to local businesses, and will supplement the County's recreational opportunities. It can also be utilized as an educational resource by providing signage that details the historic importance of the railway as it was used extensively by the agricultural and seafood industries of the County in previous times.

Relationship to MTP Goals and Local Plans:

This project is identified for development in the County's 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan and therefore would be in accordance with that Plan. This project would meet a number of Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goals – in particular those that address Quality of Service by enhancing users' access to MDOT's transportation services and Environmental Stewardship by developing an initiative that protects a community's natural and historic resources.

**2. Acceleration Lane Needed at U.S. Rte. 13 North/Jones Road Intersection:**

Description:

Several years ago, the U.S. Route 13/Stockyard Road intersection in neighboring Wicomico County to the north was redesigned to restrict certain turning movements in order to improve safety. Part of this redesign caused traffic to be redirected from this intersection in Wicomico County to the U.S. Route 13/Jones Road intersection in Somerset County. As a result, an acceleration lane is needed on the west side of U.S. Route 13 North at Jones Road to accommodate traffic travelling south on U.S. Route 13 and making U-turns and attempting to merge on to U.S. Route 13 North.

Need:

This proposal would improve safety at the U.S. Route 13/Jones Road intersection.

Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goal that addresses Safety and Security by potentially reducing collision and injury rates for motorized users.

**3. Deceleration Lane Needed at MD 413 North at Marion:**

Description:

There is no deceleration lane for vehicles travelling north on MD 413 to make a safe turn on to Tulls Corner Road. Given the speed limit along MD 413, a deceleration lane would be beneficial for safety reasons. The Commissioners recognize that the right-of-way width along this section of MD 413 is limited, and the SHA District Office made a choice to provide a dedicated left-turn lane at this intersection as opposed to providing the deceleration lane described here, as there was not enough

ROW to do both. The Commissioners are not taking issue with this choice, only that perhaps at some future date perhaps the ROW can be increased to accommodate both improvements.

Need:

This proposal would improve safety at the MD 413/Tulls Corner Road intersection.

Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goal that addresses Safety and Security by potentially reducing collision and injury rates for motorized users.

**4. Widening of Intersection at West Post Office Road/MD 675 Somerset Avenue:**

Description:

Located within the Town of Princess Anne This intersection has seen a significant increase in truck traffic on West Post Office Road.

Need:

Widening of West Post Office Road at intersection of MD 675 to allow for safer Ingress and egress of trucks. This proposal would improve safety at this intersection.

Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the MTP goal that addresses Safety and Security by improving safety at this intersection.

**5. Acceleration Lane Needed at U.S. Rte. 13 North and South/King Miller Road Intersection:**

Description:

The Mountaire Farms hatchery is located near this intersection and large trucks leaving the Mountaire complex are frequently unable to easily access Route 13 North/South because of the lack of an acceleration lane, causing an unsafe situation.

Need:

Acceleration Lane North and South US13 at King Miller Road. This proposal would improve safety at the U.S. Route 13/King Miller Road intersection.

Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goal that addresses Safety and Security by improving safety at this intersection.

## **6. Improved Access at UMES Boulevard/U.S. Route 13:**

### Description:

Currently the intersection at UMES Boulevard/U.S. Route 13 is not fully signalized and no access is available west of U.S. Route 13, where a large undeveloped parcel of land is located.

### Need:

Break Access on US 13 South at MD 822 UMES Blvd. and implement a traffic signal on US 13 South to allow for a safer intersection and increase the Economic Development Potential.

### Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the MTP goal that addresses Economic Development by providing access to a large undeveloped parcel in an area proposed for development.

## **7. MD Route 413 Dualization**

### Description:

MD Rte. 413 (Crisfield Highway) is the main access to Crisfield and consists of a single lane north and south-bound for its entire length of approximately 15 miles. For safety reasons and to accommodate future growth, dualization is recommended.

### Need:

Given the length of this road and because it's a direct connection between Crisfield and U.S. Route 13, traffic is fairly heavy at times. A number of accidents have occurred on this road which would be avoided if dualization were to occur.

### Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would improve safety and over time would also increase capacity as future growth occurs.

## **SYSTEM PRESERVATION**

### **1. Widening of Deal Island Road (MD 363):**

#### Description:

Deal Island Road (MD 363) extends from Princess Anne westward to the villages of Deal Island and Wenona located along the Chesapeake Bay. Its length is approximately 20 miles and it serves as a collector route for residents traveling to Princess Anne and to other destinations via MD Route 13.

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This two lane road is narrow and although increasing its width in some places may be restricted by environmental factors, there are areas where widening is possible and would improve safety.

Need:

Where possible, the widening of Deal Island Road would improve the safety of travelers.

Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goal that addresses Safety and Security by providing transportation assets that maximize personal safety and security in all situations.

**2. Oriole Road (MD 627) Shoulder Repair:**

Description:

MD 627 is in need of shoulder repair due to severe drop-offs from the travel portion of the road to virtually a non-existent shoulder.

Need:

Repair shoulders to decrease drop off.

Relationship to MTP Goals:

This project would meet the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP) goal that addresses Safety and Security by potentially reducing collision and injury rates for motorized users.

Any assistance from the Maryland Department of Transportation towards the accomplishment of these improvements would be greatly appreciated. Should you need any additional information regarding these improvements, please feel free to contact me at (410) 651-0320. Thank you for your attention, and again, we appreciate any consideration you can give to these projects.

Sincerely,



Ralph D. Taylor  
County Administrator

Cc: Donnie Drewer, District 1 Engineer, SHA  
Peter Sotherland, Regional Planner, SHA