



CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

William B. McIntire
Mayor

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May 13, 2025

The Honorable Secretary Paul J. Wiedefeld
Secretary of Transportation
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, MD 21076 – 0548

RE: HAGERSTOWN MAYOR & COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES
2025 MDOT CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP)

Dear Secretary Wiedefeld:

The City wishes to thank you and the Department for being such a strong supporter of our community. The funding and support that the Department provides to the City is vital to the basic infrastructure that our residents rely upon.

As you prepare the Consolidated Transportation Plan, I am pleased to submit to you the Hagerstown Mayor & Council's list of priority transportation items based on the discussion at our March 18, 2025 Work Session:

1. I-81 Widening. This corridor, as a major freight route, is crucial to the economy of our area. The frequent accidents on I-81, and resulting spillover onto the City street network, have both physical and perceived negative impacts on Hagerstown. We were pleased that funding for Phase II of the project was restored in the CTP. We will strongly advocate in every way possible to complete widening the entire length of I-81 in Maryland to the Pennsylvania state line.
2. Highway User Revenue. The City is grateful for continued Highway User Revenue (HUR) funding. Every penny of the HUR funds we receive is used to pave streets and alleys, and is critical to maintaining our transportation infrastructure. We are concerned that a leveling-off or even a reduction in HUR funding was considered during the recent General Assembly session, and we strongly support the Department's efforts to restore the Highway User Revenue (HUR) funds to previous levels.



3. BPPA Study Implementation. In February of 2020, SHA funded and completed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area (BPPA) study of the downtown and Bester elementary walkshed to improve connectivity, increase safety and improve pedestrian and bicycle user comfort. The study included several recommendations for Route 40 including countdown pedestrian lights, improved crosswalk markings, and speed management on Washington Street east of Cannon Avenue. The City recognizes that implementation of these recommendations was delayed by the COVID pandemic, but we request these that SHA implement the recommendations when possible. We received a Safe Routes to School grant to reconstruct the traffic signal at Potomac Street and Baltimore Street as recommended by the BPPA study, and will be proceeding to construction in FY 26.
4. Park Circle Railroad Crossing Upgrades. We continue to work with the rail coordinators in the Office of Traffic and Safety to upgrade the three crossings (Virginia Avenue, Walnut Street, and Summit Avenue) that are badly in need of repair, especially Walnut Street. The State agreed to fund these improvements in December of 2015 but the improvements are still not complete, mainly due to difficulties in gaining approval from CSX Transportation. We would also like to have the railroad crossing at South Potomac Street upgraded as part of this work.
5. MARC Rail Service Extension. The City encourages the Department to continue to explore the possibility of extending commuter rail service to Hagerstown. The 2023 Brunswick Line Expansion Study identified three potential routes by which service could be provided; although there are challenges in using any of these routes, the City feels that the potential benefits of having a mass transit connection to Washington DC are too great to abandon.
6. Eastern Boulevard Corridor Improvements. We support this Washington County led, multi-phase project to improve the Eastern Boulevard transportation corridor connecting US Route 40, Maryland Route 64, and Maryland Route 60. Specifically, we support the capacity-enhancing improvements to Maryland Route 64/Eastern Boulevard intersection that the State and County will commence in the near future. We also support the next phase of the project to extend Professional Boulevard to Robinwood Drive. Once complete, Professional Boulevard will provide needed relief to the Eastern Boulevard, Dual Highway, and Robinwood Drive corridors.
7. US Route 40 (Dual Highway) Pedestrian Issues. Our Engineering, Planning, and Police staff previously endorsed the "Pedestrian Safety Study and Audit" for US 40 between Cannon Avenue and Redwood Circle as prepared by HEPMPO in 2015. We are grateful for the excellent progress SHA has made in the implementation of sidewalk and crosswalk improvements that were recommended in that report, and we are pleased by SHA's current project to construct/extend sidewalks along Dual Highway from Eastern Blvd. to All Star Court. Those improvements will (hopefully) go a long way toward addressing pedestrian safety and ADA accessibility. We also appreciate SHA's implementation of adaptive traffic signal management along the Dual Highway corridor.

The Honorable Paul J. Wiedefeld
May 13, 2025
Page 3


8. We strongly support and ask for continued funding from the "alternative" transportation funding programs including:
- Safe Routes to School Program: We also appreciate that we have benefitted from nine grants that we were fortunate enough to obtain through this program and they have significantly improved accessibility around our many educational institutions;
 - Bikeways Grants: Following our 2016 Bicycle Master Plan, we obtained grants that allow us to create our award-winning bicycle infrastructure;

On behalf of the City Council and myself, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for your consideration of our priorities and for the work that MDOT is already doing to improve transportation in our community.

If you have any questions or need additional information before the tour meeting date, please do not hesitate to contact our City Engineer, Jim Bender, at 301-739-8577 Extension 124, or jbender@hagerstownmd.org.

Sincerely,

CITY OF HAGERSTOWN



William B. McIntire
Mayor

c: Senator Angela Alsobrooks
Senator Christopher Van Hollen
Congresswoman April Delaney
Washington County Delegation members
Hagerstown City Council
Scott Nicewarner, City of Hagerstown, City Administrator
Jim Bender, City of Hagerstown, City Engineer
Stephen Bockmiller, City of Hagerstown, Sr. Planner
Linda Puffenbarger, District Engineer, MDSHA District 6 Michelle Gordon, Washington County, County Administrator
Scott Hobbs, Washington County, Director of Engineering
Matt Mullenax, Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization
James F. Kercheval, Executive Director, The Greater Hagerstown Committee

MDOT Priority Letter Submission Form

Submitted by Jim Bender on May 14th, 2025 at 3:55 pm

Status: *Completed*

MDOT Priority Letter Submission Form

Introduction

This year, local governments have two ways to submit Local Priority Letters to MDOT. Either can be used. It is the choice of the local government which they prefer. The two ways are:

- Submit Letters in the same way as they have in the past.
- Submit Letters through this online portal.

The MDOT will give letters equal consideration regardless of the method chosen by the locality.

The MDOT has created this online portal as part of an overall effort to be more transparent and responsive in its processes and decision-making. With this portal, and the guidance it provides for articulating local priorities, the MDOT seeks to achieve better, more consistent understanding of local priorities. To do this, the portal provides localities with both fillable forms asking for specific priorities, as well as providing for free-form expression to provide the opportunity to offer greater context and narrative.

This portal is also responsive to The TRAIN (Transportation Revenue and Investment Need) Commission's Interim Report recommendation: "... MDOT should standardize local priority letters...". MDOT understands the need to ensure that local governments have the opportunity to express their priorities, and the following submission form seeks to balance that need along with the recommendation of the TRAIN Commission, with the aim to better serve and be responsive to each local jurisdiction.

Key Terms

Below are definitions of key terms. In the event a project may fit in one or more categories please use your best judgement.

"System preservation" and "state of good repair" project means a project where the purpose is to improve the condition or operations of an existing asset without adding new capacity such as travel lanes. Examples include bridge rehabilitation or replacement, pavement rehabilitation, incident responses, and variable message signs.

"New capacity" and "capacity expansion" project means a project where the purpose of the project is to improve the ability of the transportation system to move people and goods. Examples including widening a road, building a new road, a new transit station, and a new transit line.

"Feasibility study" means a study of a transportation need to identify a project that can address the need. A study would complete sufficient work to allow MDOT to evaluate whether the identified concept should be included in the CTP.

"Safety" project means a project whose primary purpose is to reduce or prevent crashes but that does not add or expand the capacity of roads or transit. Examples include roadway realignment, installation of rumble strips, and guardrail.

"Bike/pedestrian" or "complete streets" project means a project to provide accommodations and/or improve safety for bicyclists and/or pedestrians. Examples include new sidewalks, installation of cycle-tracks and road diets with bike lanes.

"Transit-oriented development" project means a project to support or help the construction of new residential, commercial and institutional development near a rail or bus rapid transit station.

Section 1. Local Government Information

First Name

Last Name

Jim

Bender

Title/Role		Government Entity
City Engineer		City of Hagerstown

Address Line 1
1 E. Franklin Street

Address Line 2

City	State	Zip Code
Hagerstown	Maryland	21740

Section 2. Local Government Priorities

1. What are the jurisdiction's overall goals related to transportation policies and spending?

Widening Interstate 81 to six lanes for its entire length in Maryland; pedestrian safety improvements along the Route 40 corridor; continued advocacy for maintaining current levels of Highway User Revenue; continued support for programs such as Safe Routes to Schools, the TAP program, Bikeways Grants, etc.; continued consideration of the extension of MARC rail service to Hagerstown; working toward Vision 0 safety goals.

For questions 2-10, please list the jurisdiction's priorities in ranked order, with #1 as the highest priority. Please limit responses to 4 lines of text per priority. Please include the following information in the description of the priority: location, need, proposed improvements, and, as applicable, partners and/or existing funding. The MDOT recognizes that some projects will fit into multiple categories (e.g., a project that is both a safety project and state of good repair, or even into multiple categories). In those instances, choose the one that best matches the project and note overlapping categories in the project description. An example of a priority description is provided below:

- *MD XX (Cross Street 1 to Cross Street 2) Bike/Pedestrian Improvements - MD XX from Cross Street 1 to Cross Street 2 has high rates of crashes involving cyclists and pedestrians. The County seeks to increase safety by installing a new sidewalk and bike lane in both directions of MD XX. The proposed project is identified in Corridor Study A. Though listed in the bike/pedestrian improvement category, this project includes safety elements.*

2. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for system preservation/state of good repair?

1. Preservation of Highway User Revenue funding, which is the City's main source of funding for system preservation. The City appreciates MDOT's advocacy for maintaining current funding levels. These improvements are made citywide, and mainly consist of milling and overlaying asphalt pavement, crack sealing, slurry sealing, and refreshing pavement markings.
2. Preventative maintenance of our bridge infrastructure, which will decrease/defer the need to perform major repairs.

3. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for new capacity or capacity expansion projects?

1. The widening of Interstate 81 is critical to both the City and Washington County. The spillover traffic into the City during the frequent accidents on I-81 can cause gridlock, disrupt emergency response, and force traffic onto low volume, substandard streets.

4. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for feasibility studies?

1. Bike/pedestrian safety studies along the Route 40 corridor. While MDOT has done great work on the Dual Highway section on the east side of the City, additional studies and projects should be considered on the western side of the City as well.

5. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for safety projects?

1. We are just completing our Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan. The plan lays out a menu of countermeasures that we can implement over the coming years to decrease fatalities and serious accidents. If funding can be secured, we will begin implementation of these countermeasures.

6. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for bike/pedestrian and/or complete streets projects?

1. As mentioned above, the Route 40 corridor is the key to improving bike/pedestrian safety. The City already has a system of bike lanes and routes, but these could be expanded to provide greater service.

7. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for Transit-Oriented Development projects?

1. The City supports Washington County Transit's efforts to expand their service, and to develop new routes to serve developing areas of the City that have become employment and housing centers.
2. Continuing to support the exploration of the extension of MARC rail service to Hagerstown.

8. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for smaller interventions (generally under \$5 million total cost)? Examples might include new striping, flex posts, addition of a stop sign or street light, signal retiming, or transportation demand management (e.g., vanpools) investments.

1. The City would request that MDOT/SHA review the signal timing of our downtown interconnected system, as there are certain intersections that have a lower level of service due to timing not being optimized.
2. Additional lighting along the Route 40 corridor would improve bike/pedestrian safety.

9. What are the jurisdiction's other transportation priorities that do not fit in the categories listed above?

1. Assistance from MDOT/SHA in having CSX Transportation upgrade several at-grade crossings in the City.

10. Across all of the categories listed above, what are the jurisdiction's top five overall transportation priorities?

1. I-81 widening
2. Highway User Revenue preservation
3. Implementation of MDOT's Bike & Pedestrian Priority Area study's recommendations.
4. Repair/upgrade of CSX at-grade crossings.
5. Extension of MARC rail service to Hagerstown.

11. What are the jurisdiction's priorities for housing and economic development and where is it anticipated to occur?

1. Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties, particularly in our downtown core.
2. Recruitment of commercial and industrial growth to continue to grow the City's tax base.

If the jurisdiction has submitted a priority letter through different means, you may upload the letter here.



Signed - Paul Wiedefeld Secretary of Transportation - MCC Transportation Priorities 5.13.25.pdf (0.4 MB)

I attest that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of my organization and that all information contained within is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Jim Bender

I agree to be legally bound by this document.