



# CITY OF HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

William B. McIntire  
Mayor

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April 28, 2026

The Honorable Secretary Kathryn "Katie" Thomson  
Secretary of Transportation  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, MD 21076 - 0548

RE: **HAGERSTOWN MAYOR & COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES  
2026 MDOT CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP)**

Dear Secretary Thomson:

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 April 21, 2026 Work Session meeting:

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 Phases 2A and 2B of the project was restored in the CTP. We will continue to 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 about discussions to change the HUR formula to a "per vehicle" allocation due to the growth in electric vehicles, as would likely put the City and Washington County at a disadvantage compared to more urban areas of the state. We strongly support the Department's efforts to maintain the HUR funds at previous levels.
3. **Route 40 Pedestrian Safety Action Project.** The City is pleased that the Department has initiated a PSAP planning effort for the Route 40 corridor through the City. Based upon the early conceptual designs, there are a number of potential improvements that would improve bicycle and pedestrian safety along the corridor. However, the City is concerned with the proposal to remove one lane of on-street parking on each of the two legs of Route 40 through downtown (Franklin Street and Washington Street/Avenue) to create dedicated bicycle lanes. While these lanes would likely be a boon to bicyclist safety, the City feels that the removal of parking would have a negative impact on businesses, residents, government offices, and houses of worship along the corridor. The City awaits the results of a parking demand study that the Department is conducting to quantify the impact that the proposed bicycle lanes would have.



4. **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. Some of the proposed improvements will likely mesh with the safety improvements that will be recommended in the Route 40 PSAP. 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 are proceeding with construction in the summer of 2026.
5. **Park Circle Railroad Crossing Upgrades.** We continue to work with the rail coordinators in the Office of Traffic and Safety to upgrade the two crossings (Virginia Avenue and Walnut Street) 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.
6. **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.
7. **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 ongoing 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.
8. **US Route 40 (Dual Highway) Pedestrian Issues.** We are grateful for the excellent progress SHA has made in the implementation of sidewalk and crosswalk improvements that were recommended in previous pedestrian studies and report, including the 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.

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9. **Transportation Alternatives Plan**. 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](mailto: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, Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning  
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 Apr 24th, 2026 at 1:42 pm

Status: *Completed*

## MDOT Priority Letter Submission Form

### Introduction

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. MDOT may follow up with you to clarify categorization.

"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.

A "feasibility study" takes a project from a concept to 10-15% design, including basic concept development, purpose & need, alternatives development, preliminary scope definition and cost estimates, etc. Once complete, the project is ready for project scoring under project prioritization.

"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.

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## Section 1. Local Government Information

<b>First Name</b>		<b>Last Name</b>	
Jim		Bender	
<b>Title/Role</b>		<b>Government Entity</b>	
City Engineer		City of Hagerstown	
<b>Email</b>		<b>Phone</b>	
jbender@hagerstownmd.org		301-790-0700	
<b>Address Line 1</b>			
1 E. Franklin Street			
<b>Address Line 2</b>			
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>	
Hagerstown	Maryland	21740	

## Section 2. Local Government Priorities

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

Decrease congestion caused by spillover traffic onto the City's street network caused by accidents on I-70 and I-81. Improve safety on our street network in accordance with our Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan.

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. 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.*

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

1. Continuation of our Pavement Preservation Program using Highway User Revenue funding.
2. Bridge rehabilitation for both major and minor structures in the City.

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

1. Complete the widening of I-81 to three lanes in each direction to the Pennsylvania state line.
2. Continue the widening of the Eastern Boulevard corridor.

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

1. Completion of the MDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Project plans for Route 40.

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

1. Improve pedestrian facilities at signalized intersections throughout our street network.
2. Decrease speeding on our streets on a city-wide basis.

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

1. Continue to add bike lanes on streets near the downtown core.
2. Construct the Marsh Run Trail, which will connect the Hagerstown Cultural Trail with the Hagerstown Field House indoor sports facility.

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

1. Support of the expansion of the Washington County Transit administrative facility.
2. Continue to explore 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. Refresh pavement markings city-wide to meet retroreflectivity requirements.
2. Analyze and adjust the signal timing to decrease congestion.

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

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

1. I-81 widening
2. Retaining Highway User Revenue at current levels.
3. Route 40 Pedestrian Safety Action Project
4. Implementation of BPPA study recommendations.
5. Repair of the at-grade railroad crossings near Park Circle.

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

1. Increase affordable housing stock in the City.
2. Continue to grow the City via annexation, so that we can increase our taxable base.
3. Encourage home ownership, and decrease the number of rental properties in the City.

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



[City\\_of\\_Hagerstown\\_2026\\_Transportation\\_Priorities.pdf \(0.82 MB\)](#)

**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.