



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

April 24, 2026

The Honorable Katie Thomson, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Drive, Post Office Box
548 Hanover, Maryland 21076

Dear Secretary Thomson,

Montgomery County appreciates our cooperative relationship with the State of Maryland to work together to meet the diverse transportation needs of our community. We have submitted our priorities for fiscal year 2026 through the online portal. Please consider this letter as providing endorsement of the submitted priorities.

We thank you again for your continued partnership in meeting the needs of Maryland residents and businesses in Montgomery County. If you have questions about our priorities, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Natalie Fani-Gonzalez, President
County Council

MDOT Priority Letter Submission Form

Submitted by Erika Cunanan on Apr 27th, 2026 at 5:22 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.

Section 1. Local Government Information

First Name		Last Name	
Corey		Pitts	
Title/Role		Government Entity	
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Rockville	Maryland	20850	

Section 2. Local Government Priorities

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

Montgomery County is committed to three priority areas. They include safety and our Vision Zero plans to eliminate severe injuries and deaths along our roadways; implementing projects that move the county toward achieving our climate goals; and supporting the county in achieving economic development in an equitable manner.

A significant portion of the County's spending on transportation is in the mass transit category. The goal of our program is to deliver infrastructure, equipment, and supporting facilities that provide safe, reliable, convenient, and efficient public transportation to the County's travelers. A major component of this program is the advancement of bus rapid transit (BRT) projects. These projects have the ability to change how people choose to travel around the County and support our three primary transportation goals: by shifting people away from single-occupant vehicles, supporting future economic development opportunities, and transforming our corridors to be safer and more focused on the transit-user experience.

We recognize that transportation funding is challenged and would urge the state to focus limited resources on continuing to make our roads safer. Serious injuries and fatalities from crashes in Montgomery County have decreased since 2024. However, 43 people lost their lives due to traffic crashes in the county in 2025 alone, including several high-profile pedestrian deaths on state roadways. While MDOT continues to advance the PSAP for University Boulevard (MD-193) between Georgia Avenue (MD-97) and Colesville Road (US-29), another life was taken too soon along University Boulevard near St. Paul Street. Of the 43 lives lost in Montgomery County, 30 occurred along state roadways. We all must commit ourselves to finding ways to do more with the funding available if we ever hope to reach our goal of zero deaths and serious injuries.

Montgomery County is committed to reaching our aggressive climate action goals, including transitioning our fleet to zero-emissions by 2035. We've seen peers walk back their climate actions due to financial pressure or federal policy changes, and we request the state and MDOT partner with us to address the impacts our transportation infrastructure has in contributing to emissions. We advocate that MDOT advance projects and policies that reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote more sustainable transportation choices. Find opportunities to leverage state assets and resources to advance transit-oriented development and more compact communities with support this goal as well as safety and economic development goals.

Maryland's renewed focus on TOD in 2025 is well-aligned with the county's economic development goals. The county continues to advance its bus rapid transit system, which creates vibrant corridors with opportunities for housing, jobs, walkability, and placemaking. The county is also partnering with MTA and WMATA on major developments around Metrorail stations, like Project Connect in North Bethesda. While investment in TOD is a critical future-focused investment, we advocate for the state to focus on state of good repair, including roadway condition, vegetation and litter management, and streetlights. Our region's infrastructure excellence helps us attract and retain businesses and residents.

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?

- A. Asset condition maintenance for lighting, barriers, guardrail, vegetation, and litter removal along state roadways.
- B. Advance the American Legion Bridge replacement and funding strategy, as this has been identified as an asset preservation need in the next decade and will require nearly 10 years to design and construct, once funding is identified.
- C. Modernize traffic signals for resilience, safety, and compatibility with county systems. The state traffic signal system contains many locations with structural impairment, inefficient incandescent fixtures, underperforming detection, and pedestrian crossing configurations that do not meet today's needs.

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

- A. Advance the county's BRT program via construction of Veirs Mill Road BRT, design of MD 355 Central BRT, and planning for MD 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) BRT. We appreciate our coordination with SHA, as documented in a draft MOU.
- B. Support planning and design for MARC to advance mid-day and off-peak service, including Silver Spring Turnback.
- C. Select and refine a design for MD 198 (Sandy Spring Road) that is supportive of the Burtonsville Crossroads Neighborhood Plan (2012) goals. In Burtonsville, the project should also identify ways to reduce the width of Old Columbia Pike north of MD 198 to better match reduced traffic demands and to reduce the barrier formed by this roadway.
- D. Advance design on MD 355 between MD 27 and Stringtown Road to improve access to Clarksburg, including options that improve transit performance and capacity.

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

- A. Redesign of MD 97 from I-495 to Wheaton Central Business District, as recommended by the Forest Glen/Montgomery Hills Sector Plan. The feasibility study should focus on improving multimodal safety and access by addressing bicycle and pedestrian needs and enhancing bus lanes. The 2024 Reconnecting Communities grant application outlines goals for this study.
- B. Following the safety-oriented evaluation of MD 190 (River Road) between the Capital Beltway and Little Falls Parkway for potential bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, please advance the design and ultimately construction of the long-term solutions.
- C. Safety and multimodal study of MD 117 (Clopper Road), to integrate new traffic patterns from Watkins Mill Interchange and updated Complete Streets policies of the county and state.
- D. Pedestrian improvements along US 29 at the interchange with I-495, as identified in the county's University Boulevard Corridor Plan and focused on safe access to nearby middle and high schools.

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

- A. We are supportive of the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) approach SHA has taken to address safety concerns along state roadways and would like to see continued investment in this program. As SHA continues to advance their Round 2 projects, we want to advocate for the implementation of the improvements for MD 193 (University Boulevard) between MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) and US 29 (Colesville Road).
- B. As the state considers round 3 and beyond of the PSAP program, we request SHA consider the following corridors as candidates given their demonstrated safety needs: MD 193 (University Boulevard) between MD 97 (Georgia Avenue) and the Town of Kensington, MD 193 between Franklin Avenue and MD 320 (Piney Branch Road), MD 97 between MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road) and Randolph Road, MD 185 (Connecticut Avenue) between Dean Road and MD 97, and MD 355 (Frederick Road) between Middlebrook Road and Wheatfield Drive.

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

- A. The state should focus on addressing sidewalk gaps, crosswalks, and trail crossings along state roadways. When examining sidewalk gaps, adequate buffers in support of Complete Streets policies should be a priority to improve pedestrian comfort.
- B. The county requests that the design and construction of the master-planned two-way separated bike lanes on the east side of 16th Street between Montgomery Hills and Spring Street be completed.
- C. There are numerous pedestrian and bicycle improvements to address safety and accessibility around Purple Line stations. These have been documented, and we request additional state funding in the amount of \$5 million to implement the highest priority projects that have not been funded for implementation in advance of Purple Line opening.
- D. We request the state to focus resources on improving the pedestrian and bicyclist experience along county BRT corridors. While the county is investing resources into improving station access, retrofitting corridors designed to facilitate vehicle travel is a large effort. Focus should begin around BRT stations and within activity centers.

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

- A. The county is seeking additional funding to support the necessary infrastructure changes to facilitate the development associated with the North Bethesda Metrorail station. Details are still being finalized but initial estimates are on the order of \$30-50 million. The types of improvements include the Metro station second entrance, public streets, walkways, street lighting, bicycle facilities, open spaces and associated site work, utility construction, and property acquisitions. We also request state support in advancing this complex project through timely reviews and approvals as required by the state.
- B. The county has identified the need for an expanded Lakeforest Transit Center associated with the BRT. The former Lakeforest Mall has been acquired and is slated for mixed use redevelopment. The county has funding needs to complete this project in collaboration with the developer.
- C. Rockville is a major transit hub with bus, Metrorail, MARC, and Amtrak all serving the area. A new pedestrian bridge that connects both the Metrorail station and the MARC/Amtrak platform to Rockville Town Center is necessary to further unlock development potential and improve access. The state and City of Rockville are currently applying for grant funds to support this project. We support the state's application for this priority project.
- D. Viva White Oak has the potential to transform the East County and is near US 29 with substantial infrastructure needs identified at the critical intersections of US 29 with Tech Road and Industrial Parkway. We request state support in advancing approvals and coordination on any infrastructure projects that are needed to support Viva White Oak.

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.

- A. We request that the state fund and implement the long-planned signalization project at MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road) and Ennals Avenue.
- B. Complete an assessment of signalized intersections along state roadways with elevated left-turn crash rates and consider changes in signal phasing to remove the permissive left turn phase.
- C. Identify locations for new signal installation along state roadways with priority given to those along PSAP, VRU, and county identified HIN corridors.
- D. We request that the state work with us to create shared standards for vegetation removal around and along sidewalks and shared use paths.

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

- A. Locally Operated Transit Support (LOTS) grants to Montgomery County are imperative to ensure continued transit operations in the county. We request the state consider having LOTS funding be increased annually based on the prior year's Consumer Price Index (CPI-U).
- B. The county and state have shown how priority bus improvements can be implemented through partnership, and we hope efforts like the MD 97 – Georgia Avenue bus lanes and the MD 193 – University Boulevard bus lanes provide a model for how other priority bus improvements can be implemented along both county and state roadways. We ask for state financial support and partnership to implement other similar bus priority treatments that have been identified through efforts like DMVMoves.
- C. The county is seeking state funding support to advance implementation of our zero-emissions bus depot. This project is vital to accommodating the growth in zero-emissions buses as the county strives to reach our goal of transitioning the fleet by 2035.
- D. We worked closely with the State to advance the investments in modernizing WMATA service that were eventually agreed upon in the DMVMoves Plan. We ask that the state work with us to ensure these recommendations are implemented so Metrorail and Metrobus service can remain reliable for County residents for decades to come.

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

The county's top five transportation priorities for the state align with our policy priorities and include, stable or increased LOTS funding to support our climate and economic goals, state of good repair and maintenance needs, bus rapid transit projects that are supporting county economic development, climate, and safety initiatives, other safety improvements in alignment with our Vision Zero goals, and the North Bethesda Metrorail Northern entrance project that would unlock additional economic opportunities in this growing activity center. As discussed above, each of these priorities have a vital role to play in keeping not just Montgomery County but the state of Maryland and DMV region moving.

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

The Montgomery County Council adopted the Moving Forward Together: Strategic Priorities for a Unified Approach to Economic Development plan in April 2022. The plan identifies four strategic priorities: Accelerate innovation, economic drivers, and entrepreneurship; Provide greater workforce and educational opportunities; Build livable communities that connect residents to jobs; and Create an inclusive economy for shared prosperity. Obviously, the third priority is where MDOT can help play the largest role by working with the county to connect our activity centers and areas for focused economic development, allowing everyone to access those opportunities. Additionally, the state's commitment to addressing the housing needs of Marylanders and MDOT's focused efforts to expand transit-oriented development and think about how the state's assets can best be leveraged to increase housing options should be accelerated where feasible.

The areas where we anticipate this focus to occur are in our existing downtown areas and cities, North Bethesda, VIVA White Oak, Lakeforest, and around our Purple Line stations. Anything the state can do to help improve multimodal access and safety around these locations would be appreciated. In parallel, identifying how the state can support TOD and housing growth in these areas would be appreciated.

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



[MDOTPrioritiesLetter.Endorsement_4.24.2026.pdf \(0.12 MB\)](#)

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.

Stephen Corey Pitts

I agree to be legally bound by this document.