



Queen Anne's County

THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

The Liberty Building
107 North Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617

Telephone: (410) 758-4098

Fax: (410) 758-1170

e-mail: QACCommissioners&Administrator@qac.org

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
Jack N. Wilson, Jr., District 1
Stephen Wilson, District 2
Robert Charles Buckey, District 3
Mark A. Anderson, District 4

County Administrator: Gregg A. Todd

Executive Assistant to County Commissioners: Margie A. Houck

County Attorney: Patrick Thompson, Esquire

April 10, 2018

Mr. Pete K. Rahn, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 548
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, Maryland 21076-0548



Re: Queen Anne's County Transportation Priority Letter – 2019

Dear Secretary Rahn:

The "safety and mobility for our citizens" is the driving factor towards the establishment of our local transportation priorities. Attached is a listing of the Transportation priorities for Queen Anne's County for inclusion in the 2019-2024 Consolidated Transportation Plan.

Specifically we wish to call your attention to our highest priorities which include funding for additional capacity for the Bay Bridge, critical transportation improvements on Kent Island due to Bay Bridge congestion, funding final engineering and construction of the US Route 50 & 213 interchange, access controls along US 301 and improvements for local transit.

William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial Bay Bridge

As projected in the Bay Bridge Life Cycle Cost Analysis, completed by MDOT in December 2015, traffic impacts and congestion within the Bay Bridge corridor will continue to deteriorate. The increase in traffic and limited capacity of the Bay Bridge as the single crossing of the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland will result in continued and consistent delays if not addressed now. The delays on this primary transportation and freight corridor impacts the daily operations of many Maryland residents and businesses but impacts a disproportionate number of Queen Anne's County residents making it a top priority. It is vital to the safety and mobility of Queen Anne's County Citizens that steps be taken now to accelerate the NEPA process, design and funding of Bay Bridge improvements. Due to both the local and regional significance of this facility it is essential that the planning and funding for additional safety and capacity improvements continue and remain on schedule. To assist with planning efforts, Queen Anne's County has contracted with a local transportation engineering firm to begin capturing critical traffic volumes that enter the US 50/301 "congestion zone" across Kent Island. This is a three-year traffic counting and classification project that will provide 24/7 volumes every single day. Our goal is to document base traffic information at strategic locations which will provide a basis to evaluate current and future changes in traffic patterns. We have discussed this project with your District Staff and we request logistical support and any financial assistance that MDOT can provide.



Maryland Route 18

Recognizing that the NEPA study, design and funding improvements to the Bay Bridge will take time, Queen Anne's County has identified vital interim improvements in the Kent Island Transportation Plan to improve the movement of traffic on Kent Island. The top priority of the many improvements identified in the Kent Island Transportation Plan is to enhance the safety and capacity of Maryland Route 18. The specific project is to initiate comprehensive roadway and pedestrian improvements from Castle Marina Road to the Kent Narrows. As the only alternative route to using Route 50/301 this project will serve to increase mobility and eliminate routine congestion as well as seasonal traffic gridlock. The Kent Island Transportation Plan is posted on our website at www.qac.org/DocumentCenter/View/4460.

US Route 50 & 213 Interchange

Construction of an interchange at US Route 50 & 213 is a long standing priority for Queen Anne's County. Over the last 20 years land acquisition and design work has occurred clearing the way for final engineering and construction of the project. As Route 404 is being dualized to add capacity and thru traffic on Route 50 continues to increase, this overpass becomes essential to safely move traffic between Route 50 & 213 as well as providing safe access to Chesapeake College, our regional Community College serving five counties. This project is the number one component of the long-range US 50 Ocean Gateway project.

US 301

We applaud the new US 301/ Route 304 interchange which eliminated a very hazardous high speed at-grade crossing along the US 301 corridor. Construction of this project also facilitated access control modifications to the US 301 and Rolling Bridge Road at-grade crossing to a much safer right-in, right-out intersection. There are many more at-grade crossings along the US 301 corridor which are identified in our Highway Needs Inventory for access control improvements and interchanges. We anticipate major traffic increases using the US 301 corridor due to ongoing DELDOT highway upgrades in Middletown, DE. These increases will likely have a high percentage of trucks. Therefore, we urge MDOT to move more of these projects forward in the very near future.

Transit

The Transit Division requests continued support of County Ride, our Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS). Demand continues to increase as we are providing almost 30,000 one way passenger trips over 300,000 miles per year. Additional funding is imperative to meet the public demand. The Annual Transportation Plan for FY2019 includes additional capital funding for Preventative Maintenance and Vehicles to repair and replace our aging fleet. We are also requesting to purchase a routing software system which will save time and provide efficiency for dispatchers, drivers, routing, scheduling, reporting and billing. Finally we are requesting a Transit Bus Canopy to provide a secure and safe area for bus parking. All funding provided through MTA is greatly appreciated as we continue to provide safe and reliable transportation to the citizens of Queen Anne's County.


The Board of Queen Anne's County Commissioners appreciates your consideration of our priorities and inclusion of them in the Consolidated Transportation Plan. We would look forward to working with MDOT to implement these priority transportation projects.

THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY


Stephen Wilson, President


Jack N. Wilson


Mark A. Anderson


James J. Moran


Robert Charles Buckey

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