



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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February 24, 2022

The Honorable James F. Ports, Jr.
Office of the Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, MD 21076

Re: FY 2023-2028 Howard County Priority Letter

Dear Secretary Ports:

Congratulations on being named MDOT's Secretary; we look forward to continuing our strong history of collaboration and partnership. Please accept the following "Priority Letter" from Howard County, a list of transportation projects Howard County is recommending be included and funded by the Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) FY 2023-2028 Consolidated Transportation Program.

Howard County's priorities are the result of review and input by County staff, elected and appointed officials, public feedback, and our initiative to develop the Howard County Strategic Roadway Safety Plan. Our priorities also reflect the recent passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and our membership on the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) and, as a member, we are very invested in cost-effective, systematic, and regionally-integrated approaches to addressing multimodal congestion, mobility, and safety in the Baltimore region.

Therefore, we want to focus your attention on Howard County's highest priority transportation priorities: Safety and public transit on US 1 and US 29. The projects listed below are the county's top priority projects, which are reflected in county investments of over \$6.8 million to advance and deliver projects on US 1.

Before we list our highest priorities, we do want to focus MDOT's attention on the following regional corridors and policy approaches to managing our local and regional transportation system.

- The safety of all users of our transportation systems is one of Howard County's highest priorities, especially the safety of our most vulnerable users: pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities. Therefore, MDOT should continue to invest in programs that support implementing safety-focused projects.

- As a member of the BRTB, we support funding and implementing the regional transit corridors in the State's Regional Transit Plan and request MDOT advance planning, design, and operational funding, in coordination with our local and regional transit systems, to meet the goals and priorities in the Regional Transit Plan. MDOT should ensure public transit can provide equitable and high-quality service to all public transit riders, particularly our transit-dependent community members, regardless of whether they are served by the State or local system or need to travel between two systems for essential services. We are especially interested in the inter-jurisdictional east-west corridors (#16 and #17) and north-south corridors (#1 and #6).
- As a member of the BRTB, we support the continued implementation of Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategies that offer cost-effective and considered approaches that leverage our investments in the existing transportation system. We strongly support funding and implementing TSMO strategies, particularly in MDOT SHA TSMO System corridors 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, and 13, and are particularly interested in how these strategies can address the region's freight bottlenecks.
- As a member of the BRTB, we strongly support funding and implementing bike and pedestrian projects, particularly cross-border projects, such as the Patapsco Regional Greenway, in addition to ensuring bicycle facilities on regional and state roads are incorporated into the planning and implementation of operations and maintenance projects, to enhance safety and provide expanded multi-modal options. This approach supports, and reinforces, our efforts to prevent all traffic crash-related fatalities and serious injuries and to reduce the number and severity of crashes in Howard County as articulated in the Howard County Strategic Roadway Safety Plan
- The maintenance of the transportation system in Howard County has local and regional impacts and implications and we appreciate MDOT's continued investment in state roads to support access, safety, and mobility for all. However, MDOT's support of public transit capital and operating costs in the Baltimore region is not balanced compared to other regions. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is a tremendous opportunity to address the state of good repair needs identified in the Maryland Transit Administration Capital Needs Inventory for Regional Transportation Agency buses and Maryland Transit Administration services in the county to ensure public transit riders have equitable access to reliable and effective transportation options. Additionally, support for the repair of aging and deficient bridges needs additional funding to maintain the long-term viability of this critical infrastructure.

MDOT should fund these requests over the next two years to ensure completion and deliver safety and mobility for all users in these critical corridors.

1. US 1 Corridor

- As referenced in our introduction, the safety of all users of our transportation systems is one of Howard County’s highest priorities, especially the safety of our most vulnerable users, including pedestrians and cyclists in the US 1 Corridor; therefore MDOT should continue and expand efforts to fund and deliver projects that support pedestrian and traffic safety initiatives and measures in the US 1 corridor identified in county planning efforts, including the US 1 Safety Evaluation, Bike Howard, Walk Howard and outcomes from the comprehensive plan.
- Public Transit: As referenced in our introduction, advancing planning and implementation of regional transit corridors, micro-mobility options developed as part of the US 1 Corridor Small Area Plan, removing at-grade crossings on the MARC Camden Line, and continuing to invest in the Camden Line to increase frequency, reliability, and amenities.
- TSMO: Fund and implement SHA TSMO System areas in the US 1 Corridor.

2. US 29 Corridor

- In coordination with Howard County and the private sector, fund the final design and construction of the North-South connector/Jug Handle, a major collector planned to connect the US 29/Broken Land Parkway interchange to Little Patuxent Parkway, including a spur of the existing northbound US 29 off-ramp under the Downtown Columbia Plan.
- Fund the capital, design, and operations cost to advance our regional cooperative efforts with Montgomery County to integrate with the Flash service, in addition to advancing, as referenced in our introduction, longer-term regional planning and implementation of regional transit corridor number 27 on US 29 for regional BRT service on the US 29 corridor.
- Advance the design and engineering for corridor improvements to US 29 near Rivers Edge Road including safe and convenient access to the River’s Edge Community from both North and Southbound US 29.

3. I-70 Corridor

- Fund and implement SHA TSMO System areas in the I 70/US 29 (System 1) Corridor to leverage technology investments and minimize impacts from new highway lanes
- Upgrade/reconstruct the I-70/Marriottsville Road interchange to align with County and private sector projects
- Design and implement I-70/US 29 interchange capacity enhancements

The following requests related to Design & Engineering and Construction projects reflect Howard County's priorities within the six-year time horizon of the Consolidated Transportation Plan.

Design & Engineering Projects

1. Pedestrian, ADA access, and safety improvements: design and construct pedestrian safety and sidewalk improvements in Howard County's pedestrian master and corridor plans along with the results of our recent collaborative efforts with your district engineers to identify and coordinate the delivery of sidewalk projects, including a project on MD 99 from St. Johns Lane to Maple Rock Road, US 40 from North Chatham Road to St. Johns Lane, and other projects identified in the MD 99 Investigation.
2. MD 175: Planning and design of existing access points to enhance access for all transportation modes into Columbia Gateway Drive area, an important focus of HoCo by Design, Howard County's general plan, including a third multimodal access point at MD 108/ MD 175 and direct access to Columbia Gateway Drive from I-95.
3. MD 175: US 1 to Snowden River Parkway; continued comprehensive traffic modeling leading to design alternatives including the US 1/MD 175 and US 1/I-95 interchanges.
4. MD 108: Guilford Road to Trotter Road and eventually to Centennial Lane; design and construct pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, and streetscape improvements.
5. MD 175: US 1 to Dorsey Run Road; widening and reconstruction including final design and construction of the US 1/MD 175 interchange.
6. Noise Walls: Design and construct noise walls at Dumhart Road, at the southwest corner of I-95 and the MD 216 interchange, and along MD 32 from Cedar Lane to I-95.

Capital & Construction Projects

1. Continue to fund the purchase of buses to ensure the RTA transit fleet remains in a state of good repair and leverage recent county and state investments to replace vehicles that have exhausted their useful life, in addition to ensuring initiatives to expand service on a number of the most traveled fixed routes can be implemented.
2. BikeHoward implementation: Funding, support, and cooperation to implement priority projects from Howard County's Bicycle Master Plan, a comprehensive strategy to improve bicycle infrastructure during the next 5 years. Significant projects include new shared-use pathways providing bicycle access into Downtown Columbia, Columbia Gateway, historic Savage, Elkridge, and along Dobbin Road, as well as a countywide wayfinding system.
3. MD 108: Construct intersection improvements along MD 108 at Ten Mills Road.
4. MD 100 and MD 103: Replacement of the existing interchange.

Requests for Technical Assistance and Support

- Technical assistance on the implementation of road capacity improvements at Broken Land Parkway/Snowden River Parkway and MD 32, including bicycle and pedestrian access improvements to Park and Ride lots.
- Revise technical specifications for MTA Commuter Bus 201's route to improve access to BWI Airport via the MD 32/Broken Land Parkway Park and Ride lot and Downtown Columbia before solicitation of a new contract for the service in two to three years.
- Technical assistance to designate Downtown Columbia as a TOD.
- Technical assistance on the widening of the Marriottsville Road Bridge over I-70 to enable future widening of Marriottsville Road north to MD 99 and south to US 40.
- Supporting sidewalk construction along US 1 southbound in the median between North Laurel Road and the Prince George's County line.
- Providing technical assistance and support for Howard County's project to reconstruct US 1 from MD 175 to just north of Montevideo Road with pedestrian, transit, and streetscape improvements.
- Supporting the construction of a traffic signal at the entrance of future high school number 13 on US 1.
- Advancing work to designate the Laurel Park/City of Laurel MARC station areas as a Maryland Designated TOD.
- Continued technical assistance to advance the MD 103/US 1 and US 1/ Montevideo Road Projects intersection.

In closing, please accept our thanks and appreciation for prior and ongoing funding and continuing technical assistance for the following projects:

- Cooperation and technical assistance on the feasibility study to evaluate pedestrian access and connectivity from neighborhoods north and south of Route 40.
- Advancing the design of MD 32 Alternate Bike Route projects, including the Kim Lamphier Bikeways Grant to allow Howard County to move forward with the final design of both pinch point 6 and one of the segments of the Clarksville Pike/River Hill Streetscape project.
- MDOT partnership and funding for the intersection improvements along MD 108 at Centennial Lane.
- Capacity, pedestrian, and bicycle-related improvements on MD 103 at US 29.
- Funding for the feasibility study for the Ellicott City/Oella Pedestrian Bridge.

Thank you for considering Howard County's priority transportation needs.


Sincerely,



Calvin Ball
County Executive

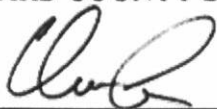
Thank you for your positive endorsement of Howard County's state transportation projects and priorities.

COUNTY COUNCIL



Council Chairperson, Opel Jones

HOWARD COUNTY DELEGATION

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Chair, Clarence Lam

HOWARD COUNTY DELEGATION

Courtney Watson

Chair, Courtney Watson

Copy:

Howard County Delegation

Howard County Council Members

Lonnie Robbins, Chief Administrative Officer, Howard County Government

Andrew L. Radcliffe, Assistant District Engineer, District 7 MDOT SHA

Eric Beckett, Chief, Regional & Intermodal Planning Division, MDOT SHA

Director, Office of Planning and Programming, MTA

Sean P Powell, Deputy Secretary for Operations, MDOT

Holly Arnold, Administrator, MTA

R. Earl Lewis Jr., Deputy Secretary for Policy, Planning, & Enterprise Services, MDOT

Teri Soos, District Engineer, District 7 MDOT SHA

Tim Smith, Administrator, MDOT SHA

Travis Johnston, Director, Local Transit Support, MTA

Tyson Byrne, Manager of Regional Planning, MDOT

Todd Lang, Director of Transportation Planning, Baltimore Metropolitan Council

File: CTP Priority Letter FY 2023 to FY 2028