



COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY

COURT HOUSE
11 N. WASHINGTON STREET
EASTON, MARYLAND 21601-3178
PHONE: 410-770-8001
FAX: 410-770-8007
TTY: 410-822-8735
www.talbotcountymd.gov

CHUCK F. CALLAHAN, President
PETE LESHER, Vice President

KEASHA N. HAYTHE
LYNN L. MIELKE
DAVE STEPP

April 19, 2023

Paul J. Wiedefeld, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, MD 21076

RE: Talbot County – 2023 Priority Listing

Dear Secretary Wiedefeld:

The Talbot County Council endorsed the attached list of priority projects for Talbot County at our meeting on April 11, 2023. Please note that this year's listing includes information not only on roads infrastructure, but Easton Airport safety improvements, and incorporated municipalities' projects.

The Council looks forward to meeting with you and representatives from the Maryland Department of Transportation this fall for the annual Consolidated Transportation Plan meeting. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please contact Ray Clarke, County Engineer, at (410) 770-8170 or Micah Risher, Airport Manager, at (410) 770-8055.

Sincerely,
COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY

Chuck F. Callahan, President

CFC/swm
Attachment

Cc: Heather R. Murphy, Director, Office of Planning and Capital Programming, MDOT
The Honorable Johnny Mautz
The Honorable Christopher Adams
The Honorable Tom Hutchinson
Mayor and Town Council, Town of Easton
Commissioners, Town of Oxford
Mayor and Commissioners, Town of Queen Anne
Trappe Town Council
Commissioners, Town of St. Michaels
Ray Clarke, County Engineer
Micah Risher, Easton Airport Manager

2023 Priority Listing for MDOT

PRIORITY RANKING	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
1	<p><u>MD Route 322/US 50 Intersection – North</u></p> <p>This intersection includes cross traffic vehicle maneuvers between two high volume, high speed roadways, and merging of vehicles in the fast lane of traffic in the eastbound lane of US Route 50. In the past couple of years there has consistently been, and continues to be, a significant number of personal injury and property damage crashes, including an unacceptable number of fatalities. Consistent with the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan, the highway infrastructure at this location should be evaluated and improved as soon as possible in an effort to rectify this public infrastructure deficiency.</p>
2	<p><u>MD Route 33 Capacity, Safety and Evacuation Improvements</u></p> <p>During weather-related emergencies such as Tropical Storm Isabel and Hurricane Irene, this corridor experienced areas of significant flooding, limiting ingress and egress from this portion of the county. <i>The MD Route 33 corridor is the sole evacuation route for this populated neck or peninsula.</i> Accordingly, elevation modification to eliminate or minimize storm surge road flooding, as well as capacity improvements, should be pursued to protect the lives and safety of citizens in this area. Also, portions of this corridor between the Town of St. Michaels and the Town of Easton experience some weekday capacity issues which are anticipated to increase in the future. Traffic counts show that portions of MD Route 33 have heavy traffic volume, particularly near its intersection with MD Route 322. As an interim measure, the MD Route 33 corridor should be evaluated for any issues or problems that would need to be resolved with future improvements, along with completing a study related to safety issues that could be addressed through traffic signals.</p>
3	<p><u>MD Route 333, Oxford Causeway</u></p> <p>This area of MD Route 333 within the Town of Oxford (near intersection with South Morris Street) continues to flood during storm events and even during many high tides. This problem will only continue to expand with sea level rise and increasing extreme storm events. As the only access to the historic portion of the town, these flooding events have become a safety concern, not only for emergency vehicle access, but also evacuation of town residents and visitors during severe storms. The State should work with the Town of Oxford to elevate this roadway segment to eliminate or minimize flooding restrictions to this sole means of access to the Town of Oxford.</p>
4	<p><u>MD Route 329 (Royal Oak Road) Safety Improvements</u></p> <p>This roadway serves as the primary means of ingress and egress for the communities in and around the villages of Royal Oak and Bellevue, in addition to being a significant tourism corridor for these communities and beyond. Paralleling MD Route 33, this roadway provides an alternative route for MD Route 33 (see priority number 1 above, evacuation corridor). The importance</p>

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	of this alternative route is compounded, considering the aging status of the bridge carrying MD Route 33 traffic over Oak Creek.
<u>Address Safety Issues for Cross Street Traffic on Route 50</u>	
5-A	<p><u>US Route 50/MD Route 328 – Goldsborough Street Intersection Improvements</u></p> <p>This intersection currently experiences significant traffic volumes at all approaches. The geometric configuration of this intersection possesses many shortcomings on Goldsborough Street, west of US Route 50. The State should work with the Town of Easton to improve the geometric configuration of this intersection approach and/or provide technical assistance to the Town for diversion of east – west traffic from this intersection.</p>
5-B	<p><u>MD Route 50/MD Route 331 – Dover Street Intersection Improvements</u></p> <p>This intersection currently experiences significant traffic volumes for all approaches. The geometric configuration of this intersection possesses many shortcomings on Dover Street, west of US Route 50. The State should work with the Town of Easton to improve the geometric configuration of this intersection approach and/or provide technical assistance to the Town for diversion of east – west traffic from this intersection.</p>
5-C	<p><u>US Route 50/Chapel Road - Intersection Improvements</u></p> <p>This intersection currently experiences significant traffic volumes for all approaches. The geometric configuration of this intersection possesses many shortcomings on Chapel Road, west of US Route 50. The State should work with the Town of Easton to improve the geometric configuration of this intersection approach and/or provide technical assistance to the Town for diversion of east – west traffic from this intersection.</p> <p><i>An overpass should be planned as a long term solution for Priority Rankings 5-A through 5-C.</i></p>
6	<p><u>US Route 50/MD Route 309/MD Route 662 Intersection Capacity Improvements</u></p> <p>As a result of increasing traffic for the growing Easton Airport, Talbot County Community Center and the likely relocation of the UMMS – Regional Medical Center to Longwoods Road (MD Route 662), one of our top priorities would be the construction of an expanded intersection to allow for increased crossover traffic.</p>
7	<p><u>Airport Road/MD 662/US Route 50 Intersection</u></p> <p>Airport Road, west of this intersection, has become a significant “bypass” route around Easton to and from the Bay Hundred peninsula (St. Michaels area), in addition to the aforementioned growth in Priority Ranking #6. Talbot County is in the process of pursuing reconstruction of this roadway. The Talbot County Community Center facility ties into the MD 662/US Route 50 intersections, which currently possess poor intersection spacing/geometry. In the short term, analysis, design and reconstruction of this area should be pursued to facilitate</p>

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	capacity and safe flow of vehicles through these intersections and to/from the County road.
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Easton Airport - Runway Safety Improvements

- Easton Airport is continuing to work toward improving the Runway Safety Area (RSA) of the primary Runway 4/22 and shift the runway 1,900 ft. southwest of its current location to bring the runway into full compliance with FAA design standards. This is critical for the long term financial sustainability of the airport and the economic benefits derived by the county. The airport has completed two phases of Obstruction Removal, successfully bringing many adjacent properties into compliance with State & federal airspace regulations and clearing more than 22 acres of trees in preparation for the future RSA.
- Classified as a “National” general aviation airport by the FAA, Easton Airport supports the national and State system by providing communities with access to national and international markets in multiple states and throughout the country.
- Easton Airport will delay seeking grant funding for Phase 3 of the Obstruction Removal Program until FY2024 (Project total cost of \$500,000).

Town of Easton

- **MD-322/Glenwood Avenue Intersection - Crosswalks**
The Town of Easton is working with SHA to improve the intersection with a dedicated Center Turn Lane, Traffic Signal, and Crosswalk. The Town’s Trail system includes a proposed at-grade crossing using a crosswalk at this intersection.
- **US-50/Goldsborough and US-50/Dover Road Intersections – Crosswalks**
The Town of Easton has heard presentations from SHA and their consultants over the past several years about proposed US-50 improvements from Lomax Street to Dutchmans Lane. The Town would like to ensure crosswalks at these intersections are included in the final design.
- **US-50/Norris Taylor Drive - Traffic Signal**
The Town of Easton is working with SHA to design/permit/install a Traffic Signal at this intersection to improve safety. Norris Taylor Drive provides access to Royal Farms, a proposed Burger King, the undeveloped Lepidus property, and the Town’s John F. Ford Park.
- **US-50 (Chapel Road - High Street) - Dedicated Acceleration/Deceleration Lanes**
The Town of Easton has heard presentations from SHA and their consultants over the past several years about proposed US-50 improvements from Lomax Street to Dutchmans Lane. The Town has expressed a desire for the design to include dedicated acceleration/deceleration lanes to improve safety and benefit emergency responders traveling on US-50.
- **US-50 - Improved Cross Traffic for Summertime Traffic**
The Town of Easton would like to work with SHA to discuss alternatives to improve cross traffic in the summertime. A significant percentage of our residential community is located on the east side of US-50, and a significant percentage of our commercial

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properties, as well as our downtown, is on the west side of US-50. We would like to explore alternatives to improve cross traffic, especially in the summertime.

- **US-50/Goldsborough & US-50/Dover - Additional Through Traffic Lanes for Stacking**

The Town of Easton would like to work with SHA to discuss additional through lanes. These streets see significant backups, especially in the summertime.

- **MD-328 (Matthewstown Road) - Sidewalks**

The Town of Easton is working with SHA to design sidewalks from US-50 to the eastern Town boundary near Hunter's Mill. This project will improve pedestrian safety and connect the residential neighborhoods to the commercial businesses in the area.

- **Rails To Trails - East-West Trail (Aurora Street - Over US-50 - Easton Club East)**

The Town has discussed with SHA our plans to design/permit/construct a trail from our existing "T" intersection of our North-South Trail and new East-West Trail near Aurora Street/Maryland Avenue, east toward US-50, install a pedestrian bridge over US-50, and for the trail to extend to Easton Club East.

- **Chapel Road (West Side of US-50) - Dedicated Right Turn Lane**

The Town is working with SHA to design/permit/install a dedicated right turn lane and make necessary traffic signal adjustments.

Town of Oxford

- **Bikeway Project**

The Town of Oxford is working with Talbot Thrive and seeking funding from MDOT Bikeways regarding a Shared Trail through town with the hope of connection at some point to the Oxford Conservation Park. This would be a rails to trails concept, as the railroad did leave Oxford (basically where Pier Street is now located) and travel to Easton.

Town of Queen Anne

- Efforts were made to contact the Town of Queen Anne requesting any SHA projects that the Town would like to add to the CTP.
- If SHA has any projects planned in or around the Town of Queen Anne, the County requests that SHA contact Town Officials.

Town of Trappe

- Town of Trappe has no projects at this time.
- If SHA has any projects planned in or around the Town of Trappe, the County requests that SHA contact Town Officials.

Town of St. Michaels

- **St. Michaels Nature Trail Extension**

The Town has recently received an MDOT grant to study the feasibility of extending the ever-popular St. Michaels Nature Trail (Rails-to-Trails) 1.2 miles north to Perry Cabin

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Park. The location of the future trail extension is proposed to be along a MDOT right-of-way that was planned for a downtown highway detour but was never implemented. The current 1.1-mile trail is used extensively by both visitors and residents in St. Michaels, allowing for safe and pleasant passage for walkers and bikers alike. The proposed eight-foot-wide trail would serve as another great tourist attraction for St. Michaels and greater Talbot County. Once the feasibility study is completed in late summer of 2023, total project costs will be better defined, allowing the Town to pursue trail grant monies to construct this expanded recreational amenity.

- **Inn at Perry Cabin Sidewalk Construction**

Currently, there is no pedestrian sidewalk connection between the Inn at Perry Cabin and the Town of St. Michaels, requiring hotel guests to walk on MD Rt. 33 to access the many St. Michaels businesses and restaurants. This is a very unsafe situation with motorists travelling in excess of 50 m.p.h. a few feet away from pedestrians. Grant monies would be used to design and construct a detached sidewalk on MDOT right-of-way. The project is estimated to be 900 l.f. and a high priority for both the Town and the Inn at Perry Cabin, a major economic driver for our region.



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COURT HOUSE
11 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET
EASTON, MARYLAND 21601-3178

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Paul J. Wiedefeld, Secretary
Maryland Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
7201 Corporate Center Drive
Hanover, MD 21076

21076-141501

